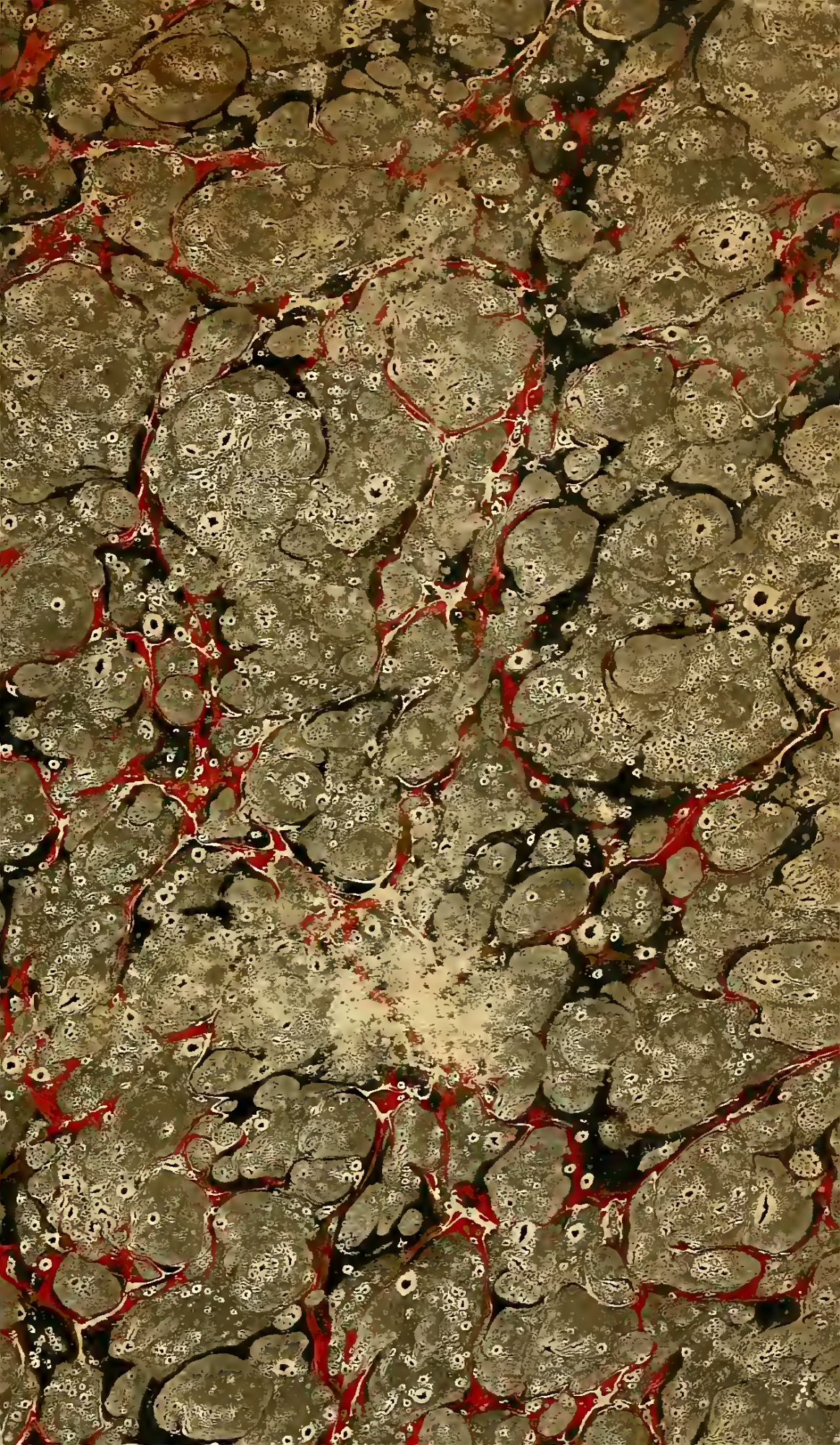

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COMPANION.

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THE

METHODIST E. CHURCH

AND SLAVERY.

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CONTAINING ALSO THE VIEWS OF THE ENGLISH WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH WITH REGARD TO SLAVERY; AND A TREATISE ON THE DUTY OF SECEDING FROM ALL PRO-SLAVERY CHURCHES;—THE WHOLE COMPRISING A BOOK OF INTERESTING FACTS.

BY REV. O. SCOTT.

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The author acknowledges himself greatly indebted, in the compilation of this work, to Rev. Messrs. E. Smith, L. Lee, and others.

This book, and the one on Church Government, should be in the hands of every True Wesleyan.

THE

M. E. CHURCH AND SLAVERY.

IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.

SENTIMENTS OF JOHN WESLEY AND THE ENGLISH WESLEYANS.

Q. I wish to ask several questions respecting the M. E. Church and slavery; but before I do this, I wish to know something about the views of Mr. Wesley and his followers in England. The slave trade was extensively carried on during the whole of Mr. Wesley's life. Christians were generally asleep on the subject; and many professors of religion and some ministers of the gospel were extensively engaged in the atrocious business of the slave trade, even at the time of Mr. Wesley's death, and for some years afterward.

Did Mr. Wesley disturb the world's slumbers by opposing, in any way, what might emphatically be considered the *world's sin?*

A. Yes; he was in this, as in almost

every thing else, fifty years before the times. He published in 1774, seventeen years before his death, a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on Slavery," which contains the modern doctrine of the strongest and severest writers on that subject.

Q. But Mr. Wesley, at that dark period, was not an *immediate* abolitionist?

A. Yes; an immediatist. His language was, "*instantly*." And his pamphlet has probably done more good in Europe and America, than any other single document ever written.

Q. Will you give me an extract from Mr. Wesley's "Thoughts on Slavery"?

A. Yes; the following extracts are from that invaluable work.

"I strike at the root of this complicated villany; I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice."

"That slaveholding is utterly inconsistent with mercy, is almost too plain to need a proof."

"*And this equally concerns every gentleman that has an estate in our American plantations; yea*, ALL SLAVEHOLDERS, OF WHATEVER RANK AND DEGREE; *seeing men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers.* Indeed you say, 'I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not concerned to know how they are come by.' Nay, but you are; you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly

come by. Otherwise *you are a partaker with a thief*, and are not a jot honester than him. But you know they are not honestly come by; you know they are procured by means nothing near so innocent as picking of pockets, house breaking, or robbery on the highway. You know they are procured by a deliberate series of more complicated villany, (of fraud, robbery and murder,) than was ever practised either by Mahommedans or Pagans; in particular, by murders of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now, it is your money that pays the merchant, and through him the captain and African butchers. *You, therefore, are guilty, yea,* PRINCIPALLY GUILTY, *of all these frauds, robberies, and murders.* You are the spring that puts all the rest in motion; they would not stir a step without you; therefore, the blood of all these wretches who die before their time, whether in their country or elsewhere, lies upon your head. 'The blood of thy brother' (for, whether thou wilt believe it or no, such he is in the sight of Him that made him) 'crieth against thee from the earth,' from the ship, and from the waters. O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it is too late; *instantly*, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood guiltiness! *Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands, are at present stained with blood.* Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt; spill no more the blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood;

do not pay him for doing it! Whether you are a *Christian* or no, show yourself a MAN! *Be not more savage than a lion or a bear!*

"Perhaps you will say, 'I do not buy any negroes; I only use those left me by my father.' So far it is well; but is it enough to satisfy your own conscience? *Had your father, have you, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting Revelation aside.* It cannot be, that either war, or contract, can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. *Much less is it possible that any child of man should ever be born a slave.* Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; *and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature.*

If, therefore, you have any regard to *justice* (to say nothing of mercy, nor the revealed law of God) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men; and see that you invariably *do unto every one as you would he should do unto you.*

J. WESLEY."

Q. Well, this is pretty plain language; but I have heard that some of the Bishops and other Episcopal Methodists pretend that Mr. Wesley approved of receiving

slaveholders into the church in the West Indies and in America. Is it so?

A. I have never seen a scrap of evidence to prove this assertion; and the above extract is abundantly sufficient to *disprove* it. What! Mr. Wesley approve of receiving into the church "men-stealers," whose "hands were stained with blood"! Preposterous!

Besides; the following is Mr. Wesley's dying testimony. The following letter is exceedingly interesting, inasmuch as it was the last but two which Mr. Wesley ever wrote, and it is dated only four days before his death. It was written to the great and good Mr. Wilberforce, the pioneer of the abolition cause in England.

"*London, Feb.* 26, 1791.

"*Dear Sir*—Unless the Divine power has raised you up as *Athanasius contra Mundum* [Athanasius against the world] I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villany, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But, 'if God be for you, who can be against you?' O, 'be not weary in well doing!' Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might, till even American Slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before

it. Reading this morning a tract, written by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance,—that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a law, in all our colonies, that the oath of a black against a white goes for nothing. *What villany is this!*

"Your affectionate servant,

"J. WESLEY."

And yet the General Conference of the M. E. Church has been guilty of this very "VILLANY," in the black law affair.

Q. Do the English Wesleyans generally take the same views of slavery as did Mr. Wesley?

A. Undoubtedly.

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference in 1830, *Resolved*, "That, as a body of Christian ministers, they feel themselves called upon again to record their solemn judgment, that the holding of human beings in a state of slavery *is in direct opposition* to all the principles of natural rights, and to the benign spirit of the religion of Christ.

"That the Conference fully concur in those strong moral views of the *evil of slavery* which are taken by their fellow Christians of different denominations; and that they express their sympathy with an injured portion of their race, and their abhorrence of all those principles on which it is

attempted to defend the subjection of human beings to hopeless and interminable slavery.

"That the Conference still farther recommend, in the strongest manner, to such of the members of the Methodist societies as enjoy the elective franchise, that, in this great crisis, when the question is, whether justice and humanity shall triumph over oppression and cruelty, or nearly a million of our fellow men, many of whom are also our fellow Christians, shall remain excluded from the rights of humanity, and the privileges of that constitution under which they are born; they will use that solemn trust to promote the rescue of our country from the guilt and dishonor which have been brought upon it by a criminal connivance at the oppressions which have so long existed in its colonies, and that, in the elections now on the eve of taking place, *they will give their influence and votes only to those candidates who* PLEDGE THEMSELVES to support in parliament, the most *effectual measures* for the *entire abolition of slavery* throughout the colonies of the British empire."

The next year the same conference passed the following resolution:

"The Conference feel that it is rendered imperative upon it, by every disclosure of the real character of colonial slavery, to repeat its solemn conviction of the great moral guilt which the maintenance of that

system entails upon our country; and year by year, until some effectual step shall be taken by government to terminate it, to call upon the members of the Wesleyan societies throughout Great Britain and Ireland to promote that important event, by their prayers, by their influence, by diffusing all such publications as convey correct information on this subject; by supporting those institutions which are actively engaged in obtaining for our enslaved fellow men and fellow subjects the rights and privileges of civil freedom, and by considerately and most conscientiously giving their *votes* at the election of members of parliament, only to those candidates for their suffrages, in whose just views and honest conduct *on this important* subject, they have confidence."

Dr. Clarke, in his Commentary, expressed himself on the subject of slavery as follows:

"In heathen countries, slavery was in some sort excusable; among Christians, it is an *enormity* and a *crime*, for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment."

Again he says—"I here register my testimony against the unprincipled, inhuman, anti-Christian, and diabolic *slave trade*—with all its authors, promoters, abettors, and sacrilegious gains; as well as against the great devil, the father of it and them."

The following are extracts from Richard Watson on slavery :

"Slavery was manstealing in its origin ; and with this vicious origin it remains tainted to this day. It would be as hopeless a task to wash it off, as to wash the Ethiop white. Characterized as a crime against God and man, the thin gauze of sophistry cannot conceal its hateful aspect ; and the attempt to find a palliation for it, only makes more audible those thunders which are launched against it, as one of the most odious crimes both in the law and in the Gospel.

My argument then is, if it was wrong to enslave the negroes, it is wrong to keep them in hopeless bondage ; and it follows that, after this country had renounced the African slave trade, it was bound by the *very principles* on which that wretched traffic was repudiated, to have taken measures for the liberation of all who had thus been wickedly reduced to a state of captivity, and long before this time to have converted them into a free, industrious, and happy peasantry."

"Slavery is a national *violence* and *theft*— an oppressive, a debasing, a relentless, and a *murderous* bondage."

The following sentiment was expressed by Dr. Bunting, President of the Wesleyan Conference, in 1836. It was expressed *in the Conference*, in reply to Rev. W. Fisk.

"Slavery is *always wrong*—ESSENTIALLY, ETERNALLY, and INCURABLY WRONG. DIE IT MUST; *and happy should I have been, had they* [the General Conference of the M. E. Church] PASSED SENTENCE OF DEATH UPON IT!"

Such has been Wesleyan Methodism from the *beginning;* and such was American Methodism *once.* But alas what is it *now!*

The following is from an Address of the Wesleyan Conference to the M. E. Church, put forth in 1835:

"Our American brethren will doubtless allow us the fraternal liberty to express our conviction that GREAT SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES are *opposed to* the *continuance* of slavery in a *Christian state;* that the permission of it is one of those deviations from natural equity and evangelical purity which call for *further deviations* to abet and maintain them; that it is contrary to the precepts of Christianity, and violates and counteracts the principles and obligations by which the Gospel urges those precepts."

In 1836 the Wesleyan Conference sent out another address to the M. E. Church, from which I make the following extract:

"*Slavery in itself* is so obviously opposed to the *immutable principles of justice*, to the *inalienable rights of man* of whatever color or condition, to the social and civil improve-

ment and happiness of the human family, *to the principles and precepts of Christianity*, and to the full accomplishment of the merciful designs of the Gospel, that we cannot but consider it the *duty of the Christian Church to bear an unequivocal testimony against a system which involves so much* SIN AGAINST GOD, and so much oppression and wrong, inflicted on an unoffending race of our fellow men."

The pro-slavery character of the M. E. Church prevented the publication of either of the addresses from which the above extracts are taken, in any of the church papers. A motion was made by the writer, on the floor of the General Conference, to have these addresses published; but it was *rejected*. Thus our Wesleyan brethren were treated with *contempt*. Is it strange then, that they have declined sending a delegate to the next General Conference of the M. E. Church?

PART II.

FORMER SENTIMENTS AND USAGES OF THE M. E. CHURCH.

Q. Was the M. E. Church ever decidedly anti-slavery?

A. The M. E. Church never advocated the doctrine of *immediate* abolition; but then we have the clearest evidence that she was formerly strongly opposed to the *continuance* of slavery in the church or in the country,—and that she has widely departed from her former strong testimony against slavery.

The first two bishops of the M. E. Church (Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury) were decided anti-slavery men. They kindled up, according to the testimony of Dr. Capers, a fire in the South which did not go out for thirty years. Mr. Asbury's Journal is full of his opposition to slavery.

Q. Will you give us a few specimens?

A. Yes.

"1772. We dined with Mr. R., who cannot keep negroes for conscience' sake, and this was a topic of our conversation.

"1776. After preaching at the Point, I met the class and then the black people, some of whose unhappy masters forbid their

coming for religious instruction. How will the sons of oppression answer for their conduct, when the great Proprietor of all shall call them to account! *Vol.* 1, *p.* 289.

"1780. Spoke to some select friends about slave-keeping, but they could not bear it; this I know, God will plead the cause of the oppressed, though it gives offence to say so here. O Lord, banish the INFERNAL SPIRIT OF SLAVERY from thy dear Zion.

"Lord, help thy people; there are many things which are painful to me, but cannot yet be removed, especially slave-keeping and its attendant circumstances. The Lord will certainly hear the cries of the oppressed, *naked*, *starving* creatures. O, my God! think on this land. Amen.—*Ib. p.* 293.

"I am grieved to see slavery and the manner of keeping these poor people.

"1783. We all agreed (at the Virginia Conference) in the spirit of African liberty, and strong testimonies were borne in its favor at our love-feast.—*Ib. pp.* 295, 356.

"I pity the poor slaves. O that God would look down in mercy and take their cause in hand.—*Ib. p.* 375.

"1785. At the Virginia Conference he says:—I found the minds of the people greatly agitated with our rules against slavery, and a prepared petition to the general assembly for the emancipation of the blacks. Colonel —— and Dr. Coke dis-

puted on the subject, and the Col. used some threats: next day brother O'Kelly let fly at them, and they were made angry enough; we, however, came off with whole bones.—*Ib. p.* 384."

We waited on General Washington, who received us very politely, and gave us his opinion against slavery.—*Ib. p.* 385

1787.—Rode to Brother Johnson's—without the labor of slaves, he manages to have abundance for man and beast.—*Vol.* 2, *p.* 11.

1788.—Virginia.—Other persuasions are less supine; and their ministers boldly preach against the freedom of slaves. Our brother Everett, with no less zeal and boldness, cries aloud for liberty and emancipation.

Maryland—most of our members in these parts have freed their slaves.—*Ib. p.* 39.

If a man of war is a floating hell, these are standing ones; wicked masters, overseers, and negroes—cursing, drinking—no Sabbaths; no sermons. But hush! perhaps my Journal will never see the light; and if it does, matters may mend before that time; and it is probable I shall be beyond their envy or good will. O wretched priests, thus to lead the people on in blindness.—*Ib. p.* 185.

Speaking of O'Kelly's secession, he says: —If the real cause of this division was known, I think it would appear, that one wanted to be immovably fixed in a district; another wanted money; another wanted ordination; a fourth wanted to do as he

pleased about slaves, and not to be called to account, &c.—*Ib. p.* 181.

O, when will liberty be extended to the sable sons of Africa? We trust the happy period will come when universal light shall shine through all the earth, and Jesus shall reign

"Where e'er the sun does his successive journeys run."—*Ib. p.* 207.

Virginia—We opened our Conference, and had great siftings and searchings, especially on the subject of slavery—the preachers, almost unanimously, entered *into an agreement and resolution not to hold slaves in any state* where the law will allow them to manumit them, on pain of forfeiture of their honor and their place in the itinerant connexion; and, in any state where the law will not admit of manumission, they *agreed to pay them the worth of their labor*, and when they die to leave them to some person or persons, or the society, in trust to bring about their liberty.—*Ib. p.* 208.

1796.—We reached Charleston.—Here are the rich, the rice, and the slaves. The last is awful to me. Wealthy people settled on the rice lands of Cooper's river, hold from fifty to two hundred slaves on a plantation in chains of bondage; yet God is able of these stones, yea, of these slaveholders, to raise up children unto Abraham.—*Ib. p.* 241.

Georgia—I saw how the flood ploughed up the street of Augusta; I walked over the ruins for nearly two miles, viewing the deed

gulfs in the main street. I suppose they would crucify me if I were to tell them it is the African flood. But, if they could hear me think, they would discover this to be my sentiment.—*Ib. p.* 246.

My spirit was grieved at the conduct of some Methodists, that *hire out slaves*, at public places to the highest bidder, to cut, skin, and starve them. I think such members ought to be dealt with. On the side of the oppressors there is law and power, but where is justice and mercy to the poor slaves? What eye will pity, what hand will help, or ear listen to their distresses? I will try if words can be like drawn swords to pierce the hearts of the owners.—*Ib. p.* 273.

1798.—My mind is much pained. O! to be dependent on slaveholders is in part to be a slave, and I was free born. I am brought to conclude that slavery will exist in Virginia perhaps for ages; there is not *a sufficient sense of religion nor liberty to* DESTROY it. I judge, in after ages, it will be so that poor men and free men will not live among slaveholders, but will go to new lands; they only, who are concerned in and dependent on them will stay in old Virginia.

On Saturday, I had a close conversation with some of our local ministry. We were happy to find seven out of ten were not in the spirit or practice of slavery.

I assisted Philip Sands to draw up an agreement for our officiary to sign against slavery. Thus we may know the real sentiments of our local preachers. It appears

to me, *that we can never fully reform the people, until we reform the preachers*—and that hitherto, except purging the travelling connection, we have been working at the wrong end. But, if it be lawful for local preachers to hold slaves, then it is lawful for travelling preachers also; and they may keep plantations and overseers upon their quarters; but this *reproach of inconsistency must be rolled away.*

South Carolina, 1801.—A Solomon Reeves let me know that he had seen the Address signed by me; and was quite confident there were no arguments to prove that slavery was repugnant to the spirit of the gospel.—What absurdities will not men defend! If the Gospel will tolerate slavery, what will it not authorize? I am strangely mistaken if this said Mr. Reeves has more grace than is necessary, or more of Solomon than the name.—*Ib. p* 15.

Joseph Ballard and his wife are gone to rest. John Perry, a pious soul, is also gone to his reward. Neither he nor Ballard were slaveholders. Hail, happy souls!—*p.* 18.

South Carolina.—I cannot record great [things] upon religion in this quarter; but *cotton sells high.* I fear there is more gold than grace—more silver than of the wisdom that cometh from above. *Ib. p.* 40.

1804.—Speaking of Ohio, he says:—Here is a State without slaves, and the better calculated for poor, industrious families. *Ib. p.* 198.

1806.—I read Mungo Park's travels in

Africa. It would seem, by this narrative, that the Africans are in a state so wretched, any sufferings, with the gospel, would be submitted to in preference. But I have my doubts. *Ib. p.* 188.

1810. We have hard labor and suffering; I do not dare to complain, but when I see the wretched fate of the poor Africans in slavery. *Ib. p.* 300.

1814.—*Georgia.*—Away with the false cant, that the better you use the negroes, the worse they will use you! Make them good, then—teach them the fear of God, and learn to fear Him yourselves, ye masters! I understand not the doctrine of cruelty. As soon as the poor Africans see me they spring with life to the boat, and make a heavy flat skim along like a light canoe; poor starved souls—God will judge?—*Ib. p.* 376.

How unlike are these sentiments to the doctrine of Bishop Hedding, as contained in the following sentence:—

"The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule, 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.'"—*Ch. Ad. and Journal, Oct.* 20, 1837.

Q. Did Mr. Asbury's sentiments prevail to any considerable extent among the Methodists of his day.

A. Yes.

Q. In what year was the first *conference testimony* recorded against slavery?

A. In 1780.

Q. In what language was it expressed?

A. "*The Conference acknowledges that slavery is contrary* TO THE LAWS OF GOD, MAN, AND NATURE, *and hurtful to society;* CONTRARY TO THE DICTATES OF CONSCIENCE AND PURE RELIGION; *and doing what we would not that others should do unto us;* and they pass their DISAPPROBATION *upon all our friends who keep slaves, and they advise their freedom.*"

Q. In what year was the M. E. Church regularly organized?

A. In 1744.

Q. Were there any regulations adopted at that time, respecting slavery?

A. Yes.

Q. What were they?

A. In Lee's History of the Methodists we are told that the following rules were then, in substance, adopted.

"We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hangs all the law and the prophets, and the unalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world except America, so many souls that are capable of the image of God. We therefore

think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose we add the following to the rules of our society, viz.:

"Every member in our Society, who has slaves, in those States where the laws will admit of freeing them, shall, after notice given him by the preacher, within twelve months (except in Virginia, and there within two years) legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he sets free every slave in his possession; those who are from forty to forty-five, immediately, or at the farthest at the age of forty-five.

"Those who are between the ages of twenty-five and forty, immediately, or within the course of five years. Those who are between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, immediately, or at farthest at the age of thirty. Those who are under the age of twenty, as soon as they are twenty-five at farthest. And every infant, immediately on its birth.

"Every person concerned, who will not comply with these rules, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw from our Society within the twelve months following; the notice being given him, as aforesaid; otherwise the assistant shall exclude him.

"No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the supper of the Lord with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.

"No person holding slaves, shall, in future, be admitted into Society, or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously comply with these rules, concerning Slavery.

"*Those who buy, sell, or give them away, unless on purpose to free them, shall be expelled immediately.*"

Q. Well, these are pretty strong measures, surely. Has this strong opposition to slavery been manifested in any Methodist conference since?

A. Yes; the very next year (1785) the conference said,—

"We do hold in the DEEPEST ABHORRENCE THE PRACTICE OF SLAVERY, and SHALL NOT CEASE TO SEEK its DESTRUCTION, by all wise and prudent means."

In 1788 the following item made a part of the General Rules:—

"The *buying or selling the* BODIES AND SOULS of *men*, *women* or *children*, with an intention to enslave them."—*Bangs' History of M. E. Church*, *Vol.* 1, *p.* 213.

Q. This certainly is speaking out plainly on the subject. How long was this strong testimony continued?

A. I find nothing more till 1796, when paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the following article appear among the disciplinary regulations. And in 1800, paragraphs 2 and 6 were added.

"*Of Slavery.*

"*Question.* What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the *crying evil* of African slavery?

"*Answer*, 1. We declare that we are *more than ever* convinced of the great evil of African slavery, which still exists in these United States, and do most earnestly recommend to the Yearly Conferences, Quarterly Meetings, and to those who have the oversight of Districts and Circuits, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our church; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, *immediately*, or *gradually*, as the laws of the States respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit; and we do fully authorize all the Yearly Conferences to make whatever regulation they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our church.

"2. When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, *by any means*, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he executes, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

"3. No slaveholder shall be received into society, till the preacher who has the oversight of the Circuit, has spoken to him

freely and faithfully upon the subject of slavery.

"4. Every member of the society, who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded from the society; and if any member of our society purchase a slave, the ensuing Quarterly Meeting shall determine on the number of years in which the slave so purchased would work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing, shall immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave, at the expiration of the term determined by the Quarterly Meeting. And in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting, *such member shall be excluded the society.* Provided also, that in the case of a female slave, it shall be inserted in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude, shall be free at the following times, namely — every female child at the age of *twenty-one*, and every male child at the age of *twenty-five.* Nevertheless, if the member of our society, executing the said instrument of manumission, judge it proper, he may fix the times of manumission of the female slaves before mentioned, at an earlier age than that which is prescribed above.

"5. The preachers and other members of our society, are requested to consider

the subject of negro slavery with deep attention; and that they impart to the General Conference, through the medium of the Yearly Conferences, or otherwise, any important thoughts upon the subject, that the Conference may have *full light*, in order to take further steps towards the eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the church of God to which they are connected.

"6. The Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those States, in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose.—These addresses shall urge in the most respectful, but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves; proper Committees shall be appointed, by the Annual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business; and the *Presiding Elders*, Elders, Deacons, and Travelling Preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses; and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further *this blessed undertaking*. LET THIS BE CONTINUED FROM YEAR TO YEAR, TILL THE DESIRED END BE ACCOMPLISHED."

PART III.

THE M. E. CHURCH PRO-SLAVERY.

Q. At what period do you date the *commencement* of the retrograde march of the M. E. Church in regard to slavery?

A. The M. E. Church has evidently been progressing *backwards* from the year 1800, though the first retrograde step was taken in 1792, in the alteration which then took place in the General Rule, leaving out the words "bodies and souls," &c., as will be seen from what follows.

Rev. Robert Emory in his History of the Discipline, informs us that he finds the following in

1789. "The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women or children with an intention to enslave them."

1792. It reads, "The buying or selling of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them."

1808. It reads, "The buying *and* selling of men, women *and* children," &c. *For this alteration no authority is found in the journal of the General Conference.*

An important admission this! If *and* was put in the place of *or* by mistake, which is hardly possible, how is the leav-

ing out of BODIES AND SOULS in the original rule, to be accounted for? Let the friends of the church account for these changes as they may; we have positive proof before our eyes, that the rule has been changed twice since the church was organized; and this rule being a part of the constitution of the church, the constitution of the church has been changed *twice.*

And the following, from a letter recently published in the Pittsburg Christian Advocate, by Rev. Mr. Drummond, is not less important.

"If we take the action of the General Conference, as a true index of the anti-slavery feeling and zeal of the church, I think it is apparent, that these have been considerably diminished since the year 1800."

Now I would inquire, what becomes of the declaration of the Bishops, made in their address to the late General Conference, that the "general rule on slavery" "*has stood from the beginning*, UNCHANGED?"

These changes have greatly altered the character of the rule. The original rule made the crime of slavetrading in the M. E. Church what the spirit of inspiration made it in mystic Babylon—trading in souls of men. When the change was

made from *bodies* and *souls* of *men*, *women* and *children*, to *men*, *women* or *children*, the idea of selling and buying the immortal part was not so clearly expressed, and the Babylonish character of the church was not so fully and clearly acknowledged. Here was a gain on the part of slavery. Though buying men, women or children was buying the *bodies and souls* of these persons, the language was smoothed down, and no longer calculated to shock the moral feelings so violently. But when *and* was substituted for *or*, the whole meaning of the rule became changed. Previous to this, the *buying* or *selling* a man, woman or child—any human being—was a violation of the rule; but not so now. It takes six things to violate the rule as it now stands. 1. Buying a man, (or men.) 2. Buying a woman, (or women.) 3. Buying a child, (or children.) 4. Selling a man, (or men.) 5. Selling a woman, (or women,) 6. Selling a child, (or children.) Mark, it is the buying AND selling all these persons which it forbids, not buying OR selling any one class of them, or any one of either class, nor yet buying AND selling any one class, or any one of either class, but buying AND selling, at least, one of each class.

Q. In what manner was the strong chapter on slavery which was completed in the year 1800, consisting of the six paragraphs

above mentioned, changed to what the M. E. Discipline now contains?

Answer. — 1804. The paragraphs about considering the subject, and petitions to the legislatures (namely, No. 4 of 1796 and No. 6 of 1800) were struck out.

1808. Paragraphs 2 and 3 of 1796 struck out, and the following substituted:

"3. The General Conference authorizes each annual conference to form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves."

This was struck out in 1820, and the last three paragraphs of our section on slavery, p. 196 of Dis., were added.

And yet the Western Christian Advocate, of December 8th, 1837, says, "our readers should *know* that our church has *neither given up nor* MODIFIED ANY *of her strong Scriptural doctrines*, OR REGULATIONS, *on the subject of slavery*." And Dr. Bangs, in the Christian Advocate, of January 29, 1833, said the Methodist Episcopal Church "has always held ONE *undeviating language in opposition to slavery*." One of two conclusions must be come to: Dr.'s Elliot and Bangs are either ignorant of the history of their church's connection with slavery, or are dishonest enough to practice deception on their readers, by affirming what they know is not true."

From 1820 to 1835 the church appears to

have been in a profound sleep; and when she awoke it was only to oppose all anti-slavery measures. Coke and Asbury were dead, and the old Methodist preachers had learned better than to preach against slavery.

The church since 1820 has borne no testimony against slavery, except what is contained in the *mutilated* general rule; and even this is admitted to be a dead letter in the South. The section on slavery in the latter part of the Discipline many Episcopal Methodists contend is not in *opposition*, but in *favor* of slavery.

Q. Have you evidence of this fact?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you give me a specimen?

A. Yes. The Rev. Henry W. Adams, agent of the Wesleyan University, in a speech delivered a few weeks since in an Episcopal Methodist Convention in Randolph, Vt., and which he has since furnished for Zion's Herald, holds the following language:—

'The section on slavery in the Discipline does, to say the least, *tolerate* slavery in the M. E. Church. That section says, (see Dis. p. 193,) "We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any *official* station in our church hereafter, where the laws of the

State in which he lives *will admit of emancipation*, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." Now this article establishes two things. (1.) That slaveholders may be *private* members in the M. E. Church with impunity. (2dly.) That such *private* members may hold *official* stations, provided "the laws of the State in which they live will" not "admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." That the first of these concessions is true is obvious from the phraseology of the section. It says that "No slaveholder shall be eligible to any *official* station in our church," &c. It does not say "no slaveholder shall be" a member of the M. E. Church, but only that he shall not be an *official* member, except under certain circumstances.

'Thus the article *tolerates* all private members in slaveholding, without rebuke. And that it *tolerates* all these *private slaveholding* members of the *church* in *official* stations, is very clear from the fact that their ineligibility to such official stations is conditional on impossible circumstances. It is well known that the laws of the slaveholding States will *not* "admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." And when this is not the case, all private slaveholding members may be eligible to *official* stations in the

church. So the section not only tolerates slaveholding in private members, but also constructively in *official.* The penalty therefore which this article denounces against *official* slaveholding members is all a humbug. It is rendered null and void by circumstances. It is only solemn farce. The section commences by denouncing slavery as a "great evil." Then because it is a "great evil," the section provides that all private members may practice it without molestation, and that all *official* members shall be tremendously punished with, constructive liberty to practice it unharmed also! Hence multitudes of official members in the M. E. Church, at the South, are now being *most cruelly punished* for the crime of slaveholding, *with perfect liberty to hold as many slaves as they please, unrebuked.* This is the terrible penalty official slaveholders have to suffer.

'Again, this section tolerates slaveholding in the M. E. Church, in the language of the following clause: "When any travelling preacher becomes the owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he executes, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives." (See Dis. p. 196.) Now the foregoing language plainly teaches

that the very worst consequence which can happen to a travelling minister who holds slaves, is to give up his "ministerial character," and fall back into the private ranks. He cannot be expelled. This is the very heaviest penalty he can suffer. But probably no slaveholding minister of the M. E. Church ever received this humbug penalty. At any rate, it is not a common thing. No, for the very penalty itself, if penalty it deserves to be called, is rendered perfectly nugatory by the concomitant provisions. The rule alleges that a slaveholding minister "shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he execute, if it *be practicable*, a legal emancipation of such slaves." All such ministers have to do, under this *tolerating rule*, is to affirm the *impracticability* of emancipation, and the rule becomes their safeguard. It *protects* them in the business.'

So far then as the Discipline is concerned, it has been for the last thirty or forty years pro-slavery in one part, and a dead letter in the other.

Q. Well, what has been the *usage* of the church?

A. I can scarcely say she had any usage from 1800 to 1836, except it were to submit in silence to the rapidly increasing encroachments of slavery, baptizing and ordaining the "domestic institutions" con-

tinually. But for the last eight years, her usage has been known and read of all men.

Q. This is the very point I have been aiming at; will you give me some facts touching his business?

A. Yes; but I hardly know where to begin.

Q. Well, how did the abolition movement in the M. E. Church *originate*?

A. In the latter end of the year 1834, a number of ministers, members of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences, addressed their brethren in the ministry of these two conferences, in an able Appeal, which was published the fore part of Jan., 1835, in Zion's Herald Extra. This drew forth a long reply called the "Counter Appeal," signed by W. Fisk, D. D. Whedon, John Lindsey, Jacob Sanborn, H. H. White, H. S. Ramsdell, Abel Stevens, and I believe one other. This document was judged to contain pro-slavery sentiments, and it was critically examined by the authors of the Appeal, April 22, 1835. About the time the first Appeal was written, and before it was published, another member of the New England Conference commenced a series of essays in Zion's Herald on the subject of slavery. The whole subject of slavery and abolition was discussed in Zion's Herald for several months, by O.

Scott and others on one side, and W. Fisk and D. D. Whedon on the other; and so rapidly did anti-slavery sentiments spread and prevail, that within six months, a majority of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences were converted to the doctrine of immediate abolition; and in June, 1835, an anti-slavery delegation from both conferences was secured to the General Conference, with the exception of a single delegate!

The General Conference assembled at Cincinnati the ensuing May. It consisted of about 150 members. All except 17 were either slaveholders or anti-abolitionists. Of these seventeen, nine were from New Hampshire, six from New England, one from Maine, and one from Pittsburg.

At this Conference commenced what may be emphatically termed, the modern pro-slavery measures of the M. E. Church; or in other words, "the reign of terror!"

Q. Will you glance at some of the pro-slavery measures adopted at the General Conference of 1836?

A. Yes. An Anti-Slavery Society had been formed there a year or two before. A meeting of the society was appointed for the evening of the 10th of May, to which the abolitionists attending the conference as delegates were invited. Of those who attended, two of them made re-

marks suitable to the occasion. On the 12th of May, Rev. S. G. Roszell presented in the Conference the following preamble and resolutions:—

"Whereas, great excitement has pervaded this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference, in lecturing upon, and in favor of that agitating topic; and whereas, such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicion and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point at issue; and whereas, in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the church confided to its care, demand a full, decided and unequivocal expression of the views of the General Conference in the premises—Therefore,

1. Resolved,—

"By the delegates of the annual Conference in General Conference assembled, that they disapprove in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of the two members of the General Conference, who are reported to have lectured in this city recently, upon, and in favor of, modern abolitionism."

2. Resolved,—

"By the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slave-holding States of this Union."

The preamble and resolutions were adopted—the first resolution by 122 to 11, the last by 120 to 14.

A member of the General Conference moved to amend the last resolution by incorporating a sentiment of the Discipline on this wise: that though "we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery," yet we are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, &c. This amendment was in the very language of the Discipline; and though the *very sentence* which would have contained it, would have condemned abolitionism, yet such was the pro-slavery character of the General Conference, that they would not say, as the Discipline had always said, that slavery was an "evil"!

Q. Of what other pro-slavery act was that General Conference guilty?

A. They refused to publish the address

of the English Wesleyan Conference, because it alluded to slavery.

Q. Did that General Conference put forth a Pastoral Address to the M. E. Church?

A. Yes.

Q. What advice did it contain on the subject of slavery?

A. It exhorted Methodists to abstain from all "abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications," &c.

They further said: "From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the conclusion, that the only safe, scriptural, and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people to take, is, WHOLLY TO REFRAIN from this agitating subject," &c.

Q. Have the principles and feelings of the General Conference been carried out in any of the annual conferences?

Yes.

The Ohio Annual Conference had a short time before

Resolved,—

"1. That we deeply regret the proceedings of the abolitionists, and Anti-Slavery Societies in the free States, and the conse-

quent excitement produced thereby in the slave States; that we, as a Conference, disclaim all connection and co-operation with, or belief in the same; and that we hereby recommend to our junior preachers, local brethren, and private members within our bounds, to abstain from any connection with them, or participation of their acts in the premises whatever."

Resolved,—

"2. That those brethren and citizens of the North, who resist the abolition movements with firmness and moderation, are the true friends to the church, to the slaves of the South, and to the constitution of our common country," &c.

The New York Annual Conference met in June, 1836, and

Resolved,—

"1. That this conference fully concur in the advice of the late General Conference, as expressed in their Pastoral Address."

Resolved,—

"2. That we disapprove of the members of this conference patronizing, or in any way giving countenance to a paper called 'Zion's Watchman,' because in our opinion, it tends to disturb the peace and harmony of the body, by sowing dissensions in the church."

Resolved,—

"3. That although we could not condemn any man, or withhold our suffrages from him on account of his *opinions* merely in reference to abolitionism, yet we are decidedly of the opinion that none ought to be elected to the office of a deacon, or elder, in our church, unless he give a pledge to the conference, that he will refrain from agitating the church with discussions on this subject, and the more especially as the one promises, 'reverently to obey them to whom the charge and government over him is committed, following with a glad mind and will, their godly admonitions': and the other with equal solemnity promises, to 'maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in him, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that are, or shall be committed to his charge.'"

In 1838, the same Conference

Resolved,—

"As the sense of this conference, that any of its members, or probationers, who shall patronize Zion's Watchman, either by writing in commendation of its character, by circulating it, recommending it to our people, or procuring subscribers, or by collecting or remitting moneys, shall be deemed guilty of indiscretion, and dealt with accordingly."

In the year 1837, the Baltimore Conference passed the following resolution:

"That in *all cases of administration* under the *general rule*, in reference to buying *and* selling men, women and children, &c., it be and hereby is recommended to all committees, as the sense of this Conference, that said rule be *taken*, *construed* and *understood*, so as *not to make the guilt or innocence of the accused to depend on the* SIMPLE FACT *of* PURCHASE *or* SALE *of any such slave or slaves*, *but upon the attendant circumstances of cruelty*, *injustice or inhumanity*, on the one hand, or those of *kind purposes* or *good intentions*, on the other, under which the transactions shall have been perpetuated; and further, it is recommended that, in all such cases, the charge be brought forward immediately, and the *circumstances* be adduced as specifications under that charge."

This resolution takes the ground openly, that slaves may be bought and sold without guilt; and not only so, but with *kind purposes and good intentions.* The *guilt* or *innocence* does not, in the judgment of the Baltimore Conference, depend on "the simple fact of purchase or sale," (mark this,) but on the *circumstances*; hence the charge is not to be brought for the violation of the "*rule*," but for immorality; and the fact that a slave was *bought* or *sold*, is not to be brought as a specification to sustain the

charge of immorality, but the circumstances. Then there are circumstances in which it would be right, kind and good, to sell or buy slaves, and in which it would be *wrong*, *cruel* and *unjust* so to do. The circumstances are to make out the guilt in a case of administration under this rule, the "general rule," not the FACT of *sale or purchase;* hence the rule does not forbid *sale* or *purchase.*

The General Conference of 1840 approved of the journals of the Baltimore Conference with this resolution in them—approved of them, this resolution and all; consequently approved of it, and thus made it their own; hence the doctrine of the Baltimore Conference, that the "general rule" is not to "be taken, construed, or understood," so to convict a person of guilt. &c., for the simple "*purchase or sale*" of slaves, is the doctrine of the General Conference—the doctrine of the whole church; so that, allowing the Baltimore Conference to judge—the General Conference to determine, the constitution of the church has been changed to favor the slave trade, trading in slaves, buying and selling them, than which nothing can be plainer.

The Georgia Conference, in 1837, passed the following resolutions, it is said, *unanimously*:—

"Whereas there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of *slavery;* and whereas the said clause has been *perverted* by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*,

"Therefore, *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference, that slavery, as it exists in the United States, *is not a moral evil.*

"*Resolved*, That we view *slavery* as a civil and domestic institution, and one with which, as ministers of Christ, we have nothing to do, further than to ameliorate the condition of the slave, by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influences of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven.

"On motion, it was *Resolved, unanimously*, That the Georgia Annual Conference regard with feelings of profound respect and approbation the dignified course pursued by our several superintendents or bishops in suppressing the attempts that have been made by various individuals to get up and protract an excitement in the churches and country on the subject of *abolitionism.*

"*Resolved*, further, That they shall have our cordial and zealous support in sustain-

ing them in the ground they have taken.—[Extract from the Minutes.]

"THOMAS C. BENNING, *Secretary.*"

On the above resolutions the Christian Guardian, a Methodist paper published in Canada, made the following sensible remarks:

"ALAS! ALAS! '*You that have tears, prepare to shed them now.*'

"Sainted spirit of the venerable Wesley! Could shame and anger disturb thy deep and holy tranquillity, this would call them into exercise! If for aught thou couldst wish to revisit this 'world of grief and sin,' it would surely be to erase from the records of Methodism so foul a blot upon the character of the system which claims thee as its founder; or to inscribe beneath it, in emblazoned capitals, thy firm protest.—Gladly wouldst thou, with Heaven's permission, have recorded, in a 'hand-writing upon the wall' of that conference room, thy unchanged belief of the true character of 'AMERICAN SLAVERY, *the vilest that ever saw the sun.*' But '*if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*'"

On the 18th of January, 1838, Dr. Capers introduced into the South Carolina Conference the following preamble and resolutions:—

"Whereas, we hold that the subject of slavery in these United States is not one proper for the action of the church, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil authorities,— therefore,

"*Resolved*, That this conference will not intermeddle with it, farther than to express our regret that it has ever been introduced, in any form, into any one of the judicatures of the church.

"Brother Martin accepted the substitute.

"Brother Betts asked whether the substitute was intended *as implying that slavery, as it exists among us, was not a moral evil? He understood it as equivalent to such a declaration.*

"Brother Capers explained, *that his intention was to convey that sentiment fully and unequivocally;* and that he had chosen the form of the substitute for the purpose, *not only of reproving some wrong doings at the North*, but with reference also to the General Conference. If slavery were a *moral evil* (that is, *sinful*,) *the church would be bound to take cognizance of it;* but our affirmation is that it is not a matter for *her* jurisdiction, but is exclusively appropriate to *the civil government*, and *of course not sinful.*

"The preamble and resolution were then adopted."

The General Conference has sanctioned both these resolutions, and passed them both, to all intents and purposes, by its act

of approval. That body approved them both, by a direct vote; hence these resolutions have become the resolutions of the whole church. Mark this!

The Discipline requires (see p. 25) that the journals containing the proceedings of each Annual Conference be sent to the General Conference. The General Conference appoints a committee of one from each Annual Conference, to whom all the Annual Conference journals are referred for examination, and, if any thing be found Anti-Methodistic, to report the same to the General Conference, to be censured or disposed of as that body may determine. The General Conference of 1840 had the journals of these conferences before them, as also those of the other Annual Conferences. This committee made a report dated June 1, 1840, in which the New Hampshire, New England and Oneida Conferences were censured by name, and some others without naming them; but no complaint was whispered against the Georgia or South Carolina Conferences. While this report was under consideration, Br. Dodge, of the Genesee Conference, offered the following amendment: "Rev. J. Dodge offered an amendment to the preamble, condemnatory of the Georgia resolution. He thought that, as the action of several conferences had received animad-

version, impartiality required that there should be uniformity of treatment. He therefore moved to amend the report by adding, 'The action of the Georgia Conference, in declaring that slavery, as it exists in these United States, is not a moral evil, contradicts the sense of the *general rule* and the tenth section of the Discipline on the subject, and is therefore irregular.'" —*Christian Advocate of June* 12, 1840.

This amendment was laid on the table, and the report of the committees approving of the acts and doings of the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences adopted by a direct vote. The journals of the Georgia Conference were approved by the General Conference, in full view of this resolution; for Br. Dodge asked the conference to say that it was "*irregular*," and they would not do even that much. The General Conference approved of this resolution; for they approved the journals, of which it was a part—the whole journals, without exception—and to approve of the whole is to approve of all the parts; for the whole contains all the parts. The conference was asked to except to this part, and would not. This makes the case still stronger. And what is true of the Georgia Conference is also true of that of South Carolina, and of the Baltimore Conference, in the case we have noticed of buying and selling slaves.

The General Conference has said *just* what these conferences said, by approving and adopting what they said. The General Conference did say, in this case, that slavery, as it exists, not in the M. E. Church, but in the United States, is *not* a moral evil; and when the General Conference said it, the M. E. Church said it; for that conference is the mouth of the church. This, all this is as clear as demonstration can make any thing.

"Not a moral evil!" In 1780, slavery was "*contrary to the laws of God*, man and nature;" now, "not a moral evil!" In 1784, it was a "crying evil," and any member, in any part of the country, who "sold a slave," was to be "immediately expelled;" now, "not a *moral* evil!" In 1785, it was held in the "*deepest abhorrence;*" in 1837, "not a moral evil!" It was still a crying evil in 1801; and expulsion was the penalty for selling a slave; but, in 1836, the General Conference condemned abolition, but refused to condemn slavery: therefore, in 1837, an Annual Conference says that slavery "is not a moral evil!" Can you, brethren, believe the Georgia and Baltimore Conferences would ever have taken the ground they have, had it not been for the doings of the General Conference? Can you see how a Methodist Bishop could possibly put such resolutions to the vote, if

a Bishop has a right in any case to decline such business? Was that "disciplinary business?" "proper conference business?" In view of all these facts, can you doubt that the influence of the M. E. Church is in favor of slavery? For all this prostration of discipline, the General Conference laid the foundation!

The Georgia Conference evidently believe there are but two sides to this question. They look upon opposition to abolition as sustaining slavery. Hence their vote of approbation to the Bishops for their attempts to put down abolitionism! The very conference which says that slavery "is not a moral evil," resolves to *sustain* the Bishops in opposing abolition! Will they not be proud of *such tokens* of "approbation" from *such a source, and in such a* CONNECTION? One resolution says slavery "is not a moral evil," another pledges the conference to sustain the "dignified course" of the Bishops in "suppressing" abolitionism!

But to see a body of professed ministers of Christ call that sum of all villanies, (American slavery,) a "civil and domestic institution!" How *civil* to rob human beings of all their rights—to enslave the image of God—to steal and enslave innocent children! If this is a *civil* institution, I hardly know where we should go to find

a criminal institution! All this passes unreproved by the official organs of the church!

And now I ask, has not the *spirit* as well as the practice of slavery increased in the M. E. Church for the last fifty years? I can no more doubt this, than I can doubt my existence. If any proposition can be established by facts, this can be.

And is it not equally certain, that the influence of the M. E. Church has been for some time past in favor of slavery? I cannot resist this conviction. I am morally certain that the M. E. Church is at this time one of the "great props" of slavery. A slaveholding ministry! A slaveholding church! What inconsistency! Do not many ministers and members give their influence and example to what the Bible calls, and Mr. Wesley considers, *man-stealing?*

Are there not Achans in the church, a thousand times worse than Achan of old? He robbed God in temporal things; she has robbed him of *his own image.* She has stolen, not a wedge of gold, a Babylonish garment and a few hundred shekels of silver, but she has stolen *human beings*, and made merchandize of *immortal spirits!* And even in the North, she has apologized for this iniquity, and connived

at it, and attempted to *cover it up* with the WORD OF GOD! The highest ecclesiastical tribunal of the Methodist Episcopal Church has solemnly condemned the course of all her ministers and members who dare to plead the cause of the oppressed, while it has refused to breathe a syllable against those who oppress and rob God's intelligent creatures of their all! It appears to me that the language of the Prophet Ezekiel to ancient Tyre, is as applicable to the M. E. Church as it was to her.

"Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy TRAFFIC; therefore will I bring forth a FIRE from the MIDST OF THEE, it shall DEVOUR THEE, and I will bring thee to ASHES upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee."—*Ezekiel* XXVIII.

The M. E. Church has "defiled" her "SANCTUARIES" by the iniquity of her "TRAFFIC." And does not the Almighty now threaten to cast her off as profane, and to destroy her? Is not the portrait of Tyre too true a likeness of the Methodist Episcopal Church? If she does not put away her iniquity, violence and merchandize in the souls and bodies of men, the days of her prosperity will soon be numbered.

It may be said that slavery has always

been in the church, and nevertheless it has prospered. True ; but in the first place the M. E. Church was organized with the express understanding that slavery was not to be continued in it. Secondly, many of our fathers did all they could to expel it from the church. But thirdly, it may perhaps be said, that the time of this ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth he all *Methodists*, every where, to repent. The truth is, our whole country *has been* asleep on this subject. Darkness has covered the whole land. But now the light shineth.

The voice of warning has gone forth, and the Church now sins at her peril. Never till of late, has a Methodist minister dared to lift his *voice* or *pen* in defence of slavery ; but now, the manstealer and robber finds apologists and defenders among Methodist Episcopal preachers, and that too in the Free States ! The Church now refuses to speak out to the world in the language of her Discipline ; and she hedges up the way of those who *dare to do so*. The church is stained with *blood*, and haunted with the groans of *deathless spirits !* Surely, it is enough. God's judgments will not always linger, nor his justice forever sleep. She claims the descendants of *stolen human beings* as PROPERTY ! She makes slaves of the purchase of the Redeemer's blood.

Rev. Wm. Winans said, on the floor of the last General Conference, that he had become a slaveholder from *principle !*

Q. Has not the M. E. Church persecuted "to the death" abolitionists, for the eight years last past, for their anti-slavery operations ?

A. Yes ; many members of the church have been expelled — class-leaders, exhorters and local preachers have been disfranchised—young men have been refused admission into conferences for no other reason but their being active abolitionists. Travelling preachers have been suspended, and I believe, in some instances, expelled for contumacy and insubordination in relation to abolition. Presiding elders have been removed from their districts for their abolition measures, and bishops have gagged annual conferences on the slave question. The Discipline has been twice altered to effect the expulsion of the editor of Zion's Watchman, and bishops have exhorted Methodist trustees to close their houses against Methodist anti-slavery lectures. Several conferences have forced their young men to pledge themselves that they would not agitate the church with discussions on the slave question, before they could be ordained ; while no reformation pledges have been required of *men-stealing* ministers, as a condition of ordina-

tion. That which, according to Mr. Wesley, is exactly on a level with manstealing, is, in the opinion of the church, a very small matter compared with the shocking abominations of abolitionism !

Q. Have *prominent Episcopal Methodist ministers*, North and South, expressed themselves favorably to slavery ?

A. Yes; Rev. N. Bangs, D. D., of New York, has said—

"It appears evident, that however much the apostle might have deprecated SLAVERY as it then existed throughout the Roman empire, he did not feel it his duty, as an ambassador of Christ, to disturb those *relations* which subsisted between masters and servants, by denouncing slavery as *such a mortal sin*, that they could not be servants of Christ in such a relation."

Rev. E. D. Simms, Professor in Randolph Macon College, a Methodist Episcopal institution, said, in a treatise on Slavery—

"These extracts from HOLY WRIT UNEQUIVOCALLY ASSERT THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY IN SLAVES, together with the usual incidents of that right; such as the power of acquisition and disposition in various ways, according to municipal regulations. The right to buy and sell, and to transmit to children by way of inheritance, is clearly

stated. The only restriction on the subject, is in reference to the *market*, in which slaves or bondsmen were to be purchased.

"Upon the whole, then, whether we consult the Jewish polity, instituted by God himself; or the uniform opinion and practice of mankind in all ages of the world; or the injunctions of the New Testament and the Moral Law; we are brought to the conclusion, that slavery is not immoral.

"Having established the point, that the first African slaves were legally brought into bondage, the right to detain their children in bondage, follows as an indispensable consequence.

"Thus we see, that the slavery which exists in America, was *founded in right.*"

Rev. Wilbur Fisk, D. D., late President of the Wesleyan University in Connecticut, said, in the Counter Appeal—

"The relation of master and *slave*, may and *does*, *in many cases*, exist under such circumstances, as free the master from the just charge and guilt of immorality.

"1 Cor. vii. 20—23.

"This text seems mainly to *enjoin* and *sanction* the *fitting continuance* of their present social relations; the freeman was to remain free, and the slave, unless emancipation should offer, *was to remain a slave.*

"The general rule of *Christianity not only permits, but in* supposable circumstances, *enjoins a continuance of the master's authority.*

"The New Testament enjoins obedience upon the slave as an obligation *due* to a present *rightful* authority."

Rev. Elijah Hedding, D. D., one of the Methodist Bishops, has said in a published address:

"The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule, 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.'"—*Ch. Adv. and Jour. Oct.* 20, 1837.

The Rev. William Winans, of Mississippi, in the General Conference, in 1836, said:

"He was not born in a slave State—he was a Pennsylvanian by birth; he had become a slaveholder *on principle.*" * * * "It was important to the interests of slaves, and in view of the question of slavery, that there be Christians who were slaveholders. Christian ministers should be slaveholders, and diffused throughout the South. Yes, sir, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, should be slaveholders:—yes, he repeated it boldly—there should be members, and *deacons*, and ELDERS, and BISHOPS, too, who were slaveholders."

The Rev. J. Early, of Virginia, on the same occasion said:

"SIR,—We have no *energy*. But if a majority of this conference have no energy

—not enough of it, to protect their own honor from insult and degradation—be it known, that there are in the conference those who *have*— AND WHO OUGHT TO BE BY THEMSELVES."

The Rev. J. H. Thornwell, at a public meeting held in South Carolina, supported the following resolutions :

"That slavery as it exists in the South is no evil, and is consistent with the principles of revealed religion ; and that all opposition to it arises from a misguided and fiendish fanaticism, which we are bound to resist in the very threshold.

"That all interference with this subject by fanatics is a violation of our civil and social rights—is unchristian and inhuman, leading necessarily to anarchy and bloodshed ; and that the instigators are murderers and assassins."

The Rev. Mr. Crowder, of Virginia, said on the floor of the General Conference, in 1840 :

"In its *civil* aspect, neither the general government, or any other government, ecclesiastical or civil, either directly or indirectly, has a right to *touch* slavery. In its *ecclesiastical* aspect,—we are bound by the twenty-third article of our religion, to submit to the civil regulations of the State under which we live. In its *moral* aspect, —slavery was not only countenanced, per-

mitted, and regulated by the Bible, but it was positively *instituted* by GOD HIMSELF; He had in so many words ENJOINED it."

The Rev. George W. Langhorne, of North Carolina, thus writes to the editor of Zion's Watchman, under date, June 25, 1836:

"I, sir, would as soon be found in the ranks of a banditti, as numbered with Arthur Tappan and his wanton coadjutors. Nothing is more appalling to my feelings as a man, contrary to my principles as a Christian, and *repugnant* to my soul as a *minister*, than the insidious proceedings of such men.

"If you have not resigned your credentials as a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I really think that, as an *honest* man, you should now do it. In your ordination vows you solemnly promised to be obedient to those who have rule over you; and since they [the General Conference] have spoken, and that distinctly, too, on this subject, and disapprobate your conduct, I conceive you are bound to submit to their authority, or leave the church."

The Rev. J. C. Postell, in July, 1836, delivered an address at a public meeting at Orangeburgh Court-house, S. C., in which he maintains,—1. That slavery is a judicial visitation. 2. That it is not a moral

evil. 3. That it is supported by the Bible. He thus argues his second point:

"It is not a moral evil. The fact that slavery is of Divine appointment, would be proof enough with the Christian, that it could not be a moral evil. But when we view the hordes of savage marauders and human cannibals enslaved to lust and passion, and abandoned to idolatry and ignorance, to revolutionize them from such a state, and enslave them where they may have the gospel, and the privileges of Christians; so far from being a moral evil, *it is a merciful visitation.* If slavery was either the invention of man or a moral evil, it is logical to conclude, the power to create has the power to destroy. Why then has it existed? And why does it now exist amidst all the power of legislation in state and church, and the clamor of abolitionists? *It is the Lord's* DOINGS, AND MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES: and had it not been done for the best, God alone, who is able, long since would have overruled it. IT IS BY DIVINE APPOINTMENT."

On that occasion the same Rev. gentleman read a letter which he had addressed to the Editor of Zion's Watchman—of which the following are extracts:

"To La Roy Sunderland, &c.

"Did you calculate to misrepresent the Methodist Discipline, and say it supported

abolitionism, when the General Conference, in their late resolutions, denounced it as a *libel on truth.* '*Oh, full of all subtlety, thou child of the devil!*'—all *liars*, saith the sacred volume, shall have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone.

"I can only give one reason why you have not been indicted for a libel:—The law says, 'The greater the truth, the greater the libel:' and as your paper has no such ingredient, it is construed but a small matter. But if you desire to educate the slaves, I will tell you how to raise the money without editing Zion's Watchman: you and old Arthur Tappan come out to the South this winter, and they will raise one hundred thousand dollars for you. New Orleans itself will be pledged for it. Desiring no further acquaintance with you, and never expecting to see you but once in time or eternity, that is at judgment, I subscribe myself, the friend of the Bible, and the opposer of Abolitionists.

"J. C. Postell,
"Orangeburgh, July 21st, 1836."

Similar extracts might be multiplied to a great extent, but the above are sufficient.

Q. Have the slaveholders in the M. E. Church threatened to divide the Church, if they could not have a slaveholding Bishop, and other matters to their liking?

A. Yes; caucuses were held by the slaveholders at the General Conference in

1836, to consider the propriety of dividing the Church; and John Early said, on the floor of that conference, that if they could not be protected, it was "time they were by themselves." Immediately after the General Conference of 1836, several of its members made a move for an ultimate division of the Church. The following extract is from a printed circular, which is dated Richmond, Va., July 30, 1836, and signed by William A. Smith:

"GENERAL CONFERENCE AND SLAVERY. —This is a delicate and painful subject. It is true, the Conference voted promptly against the wild schemes of abolitionists; unfortunately, however, it is equally true that a large majority voted on the principles of abolitionism in the *election of Bishops*,—thus favoring the unrighteous prejudices of abolitionists, and proscribing from this highest office in the Church, men (admitted in private conversations to possess superior qualifications to those appointed) simply because of their connection with slavery. Will the Southern Church *submit* to this? Can they, in justice to themselves, submit to a continuance of this *proscriptive* system! They *will* not! — They *cannot*. The general union of the Northern and Southern Church, however desirable, *cannot be perpetuated* at the price of proscription. If the General Conference do not recede from this position, *I am free to de-*

clare to you, that I will on all suitable occasions seek to establish a SOUTHERN GENERAL CONFERENCE."

Now look at the following extract from an article published in the Virginia Conference Sentinel, of which Mr. Smith was publisher. This article is signed, "A Voice from Virginia." Here the General Conference is charged with "gross dissimulations!"

"It was hoped, Mr. Editor, by the friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, throughout the South, that the resolutions which were adopted by the last General Conference, condemnatory of the principles and conduct of the abolitionists, were indicative of a determination on the part of the Methodist ministry throughout the North, not to interfere with the domestic institutions of the South, but to avoid every thing which might excite sectional jealousies, or tend to interrupt the peace and harmony of our union. But alas, sir, before the adjournment of that body, palpable evidence was given that those resolutions were GROSS DISSIMULATIONS, and our fond hopes of unanimity and brotherly love were forced to give place to the strong and obvious conviction, that PROSCRIPTION was the order of the day.

"The election of bishops settled that point beyond a reasonable doubt. No one denied, that the most prominent candidate

of the South for the Episcopate, was possessed of superior qualifications for the office over two of those elected. But because he was a slaveholder, this was "*disqualification*" enough. It was in vain that the southern members warned their northern brethren that this was a spirit of proscription, and that they could not submit. INSULT is heaped upon INJURY, and they are told in the language of the Pittsburgh editor, that they should not "attempt to force themselves as ambassadors of Christ upon those who cannot receive them as such."

"We ask, Mr. Editor, and we do it seriously, will our Southern Conferences send delegates longer to an assembly where a bigoted and reckless majority silence all their appeals for justice and right, by their fanatical clamors; and even trample upon their feelings as men and ministers, with the utmost indifference? We trust not!—We hope, sir, if delegates are sent again, it will be to fix the BOUNDARY between northern fanaticism and southern rights. Such sentiments as are held at the North, in regard to us and our institutions, imperiously demand that such a course should be pursued."

In a letter to the editor of the Pittsburgh Conference Journal, Mr. Smith disclaimed the authorship of this plan, and said that it was the plan of the whole South, entered into at the late General Conference, the

evening of the day on which the bishops were elected.—Not a word of reproof have these brethren received from the M. E. General Conference papers.

Q. Were there any threats thrown out at the General Conference of 1840, in relation to a division of the Church?

A. Yes; while the proposition to reconsider the black resolution (which had been adopted a few days before) was under consideration, the following sentiments were expressed.

Rev. Dr. J. A. Few, of Georgia, the mover of the original resolution:

"The rejection of negro testimony is one of the necessary circumstances, under which slaveholding can exist; indeed, it is utterly impossible for it to exist without it; therefore it is not sinful to hold slaves in the condition, and under the circumstances which they are held at the South, inasmuch as they can be held, under no other circumstances.* * If you believe that slaveholding is necessarily sinful, come out with the abolitionists, and honestly say so. If you believe that slaveholding is necessarily sinful, you believe we are necessarily sinners: and, if so, come out and honestly declare it, *and let us leave you.** * We want to know distinctly, precisely, and honestly, the position which you take. We cannot be tampered with by you any longer. We have

had enough of it. We are tired of your sickly sympathies.* * If you are not opposed to the principles which it involves, unite with us, *like honest men*, and go home, and boldly meet the consequences. We say again, you are responsible for this state of things! for it is *you* who have driven us to the alarming point, where we find ourselves.* * *You* have made that resolution absolutely necessary to the quiet of the South! But *you* now revoke that resolution! and, you pass the Rubicon! Let me not be misunderstood. I say, *you* pass the Rubicon! If you revoke, you revoke the principle which that resolution involves, and you array the whole South against you, *and we must separate!*"

The Rev. William Winans, of Mississippi, (the same who was a delegate to the General Conference in 1836 :)

"Repeal that resolution, and you pass the Rubicon! Dear as union is, sir, there are interests at stake in this question which are dearer than *union!* * * * * I call heaven to record against you this day, that if you repeal that resolution, you seal the damnation of thousands of souls! I beseech you as upon my knees not to do it."

The Rev. Mr. Collins, of Maryland,

"Admonished the conference, that the moment they rescinded that resolution, they passed the Rubicon. The fate of the connexion was sealed."

The Rev. Wm. A. Smith, of Virginia,

"Agreed with the brother from Mississippi, that there were interests involved in this question *dearer* than UNION itself, however dear that might be. Southerners are not prepared to commit their interests, much less their consciences, to the holy keeping of northern men. *Conscience* was involved in this matter, and they could not be coerced."

Rev. Nathan Bangs, D. D., of New York. This gentleman did not propose to divide the Church, but sacrifice the colored population, and Silas Comfort to keep it together. He said:

"We were on a snag, and he believed he could help us off. He perceived a way to get out of the difficulty, and proceeded to read three resolutions, one of which went to *affirm* the decision of the Missouri Conference in the Comfort case."

Rev. P. P. Sanford, of New York, gave him a merited castigation, as follows:

"He was surprised at the course of Dr. Bangs, who, when the Missouri case was pending, retired without the bar, and thus *dodged* the question; and when Dr. Few's resolution was passed, he sat still in his chair, and refused to do his duty, but *now* he comes forward with a series of resolutions entirely inconsistent with all the facts

in the case, with the very benevolent intention to enlighten us on the subject!! But what does he say? Why, he declares that he believes that this conference ought to affirm the decision of the Missouri conference in the case of Silas Comfort! And what was that decision? Why, that it is mal-administration to admit the testimony of a *colored* man in the trial of a white man! So that Comfort was condemned, as appears from the journals of that conference, solely for admitting the testimony of a *colored man!* And Dr. Bangs is the man who declares upon this floor, that that decision ought to be affirmed by this conference!! He was perfectly *astounded!*"

Q. If the Southern "hot bloods" would not submit to a reconsideration of the resolution in 1840, without a division, what probability is there that matters will be different in 1844?

A. None at all.

Q. Is there the least probability that the *black act* will be rescinded in 1844, without *condition*, *qualification* or *substitute?*

A. Not the least.

Q. Would not a majority of the General Conference prefer that the offensive resolution should be rescinded?

A. Quite likely; but then they fear the slaveholders; and they will not *dare* to

touch that pro-slavery regulation, if their Southern overseers forbid it.

Q. Is not the pretence by the Methodist Episcopal ministers, that the next General Conference will do something capital in favor of abolition, a piece of deception, played off to keep the members in the Church?

A. I cannot view it in any other light.

Q. Of what particular pro-slavery measures was the General Conference of 1840 guilty?

A. 1. It was *proved* on the floor of the General Conference, that the word "*or*" in the General Rule had been changed to "*and*," by *carelessness* or *design*, thus favoring slavery. This Stephen G. Roszel and Dr. Capers boldly asserted. No one either did or could deny this. It was *proved* that the word "or" was in the Discipline since 1808; and since that time the change could not have been constitutionally made without going the round of the annual conferences: but from the records it appears that this had never been done. And yet with all this plain, palpable evidence before them, they refused to make the correction! And why did they do this? I know no other reason but their *love of slavery;* or, at least, their fear of slaveholders.

A. 2. They refused, when their atten-

tion was called to the subject, to take exceptions to the resolutions of the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences, declaring slavery *not to be a moral evil!* And as the General Conference approved the journals of these conferences, with these resolutions in them, they thereby endorsed the doctrine which they contain. The doctrine, therefore, that slavery is not a moral evil, *as it exists in the United States*, is the deliberate sentiment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in her collective capacity.

A. 3. But to cap the climax of pro-slaveryism, the General Conference passed the following resolution.

"*That it is inexpedient and* UNJUSTIFIABLE *in any of our ministers to admit the testimony of* COLORED PERSONS *against a white person, in church trials, in those States and Territories where such testimony is rejected in* COURTS OF LAW."

Here the rights and interests of the membership of the Church are not only cloven down, but the positive authority of Jesus Christ is set aside, and the unrighteous laws of a slaveholding community are made the measure of church privileges, and the standard of ecclesiastical proceedings. The Saviour has expressly commanded, in case of a trespassing brother,

that the aggrieved person, after making an unsuccessful attempt at reconciliation by private means, shall "tell it to the church." But a colored member of the M. E. Church, however much he may be injured by his *white* brother, cannot bring his case before the church for redress, (unless through the medium of *white witnesses ;)* for neither he nor his colored associates may testify to the facts in the case.

Q. Have any of the Bishops refused to put anti-slavery resolutions in any of the Northern Conferences since the General Conference of 1840?

A. Yes; Bishop Waugh, at the New England Conference held in Springfield, Mass., in June, 1842, refused to put the question for the adoption of the following resolution, stating that it was too late in the day to give his reasons for so doing.

"*Resolved*, That it is the solemn conviction of the New England Annual Conference, that all slaveholding, that is, all recognition of the right of property in human beings, is contrary to the laws of nature and religion, and ought therefore to be discouraged by all wise and prudent means."

Q. Did the Bishops make any objection to putting the resolutions in the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences, *justifying* slavery as it exists in the nation?

A. I believe not.

Q. And has the General Conference approved of their administration since?

A. It has.

Q. Is not the Church then responsible in a double sense, for these villanous resolutions?

A. Yes.

Q. From all these considerations, does it not appear that the influence of the Bishops *is*, and *has been* for years, decidedly in favor of slavery?

A. Yes.

Q. And is not the influence of all the General Conference papers in favor of *slaveholding*, as it exists in the M. E. Church?

A. We know of no exception.

Q. Is it slandering the Church then, to say, that as a whole, she is *pro-slavery to the core?*

A. Not unless truth is slander.

Q. Is there not as much proof that the General Conference of the M. E. Church is pro-slavery, as there is that the United States Congress is pro-slavery?

A. There certainly is.

Q. Are not then those brethren who come out from pro-slavery political parties, in consequence of their corruption, and still remain in a pro-slavery church, *grossly inconsistent?*

A. They surely are; and it is strange they don't perceive it. They are doubtless blinded by *bigotry* and the *love of sect.* Their eyes, however, are beginning to be opened.

Q. What is the least that ought to reconcile Methodist Episcopal abolitionists to remain in the church after the General Conference of 1844?

A. 1. An unequivocal, unconditional, and unqualified rescinding of the colored testimony resolution.

A. 2. The passage of a resolution, by the Gen. Conf., that slavery, as it exists in the United States, *is* a moral evil. This would counteract her tacit endorsement of the doctrine that slavery is *not* a moral evil.

A. 3. A re-affirmation of the doctrine of the Church in 1785, in the following words.

"We do hold in the deepest abhorrence, the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means."

The two first are called for, to bring the church back to where she stood four years ago; and the last is called for, that she may retrace one of her many steps of backsliding in bygone years. Unless all this is done, we do not see how any abolitionist can have the least hope of purifying the Church. This is much less than ought

to be done—less than the spirit of the age calls for. If all this were done, the Church would still TOLERATE manstealing, with her present disciplinary regulations. Therefore, we do not see how abolitionists could remain in the Church. But not more than one of these three things will be done; and I do not believe so much as that will be effected.

PART IV.

THE DUTY OF SECEDING FROM PRO-SLAVERY CHURCHES.

Q. Is it right to remain a member of a church which tolerates slaveholding?

A. No, unless it be right to hold communion with *manstealers*—which are the worst of all stealers.

Q. But is there no difference between *holding* slaves and *stealing* them?

A. Not according to Mr. Wesley, not according to the Bible. Mr. Wesley says, "This *equally* concerns *all slaveholders*, seeing men-buyers are exactly on a level with *menstealers*." And the Bible says, "*If he be found in his hand*, he shall surely be put to death." Here the crime of *hold-*

ing those in bondage who were originally stolen, is considered a crime of equal enormity with that of the first thieves—a crime punishable (under the laws) with DEATH !

Q. If the Golden Rule sanctions slaveholding, does it not, if Wesley and the Bible are correct, sanction *manstealing* ?

A. Most certainly.

Q. If the Bible sanctions *manstealing*, must it not, by parity of reasoning, sanction sheep-stealing, horse-stealing, and, indeed, all other crimes ?

A. I see no way to avoid such a conclusion.

If it be right to retain a connection with a church which tolerates slaveholding, then it must follow that we are at liberty to remain in fellowship with any other class of sinners, or persons who commit any other sin. Slavery involves almost every other crime : it is the embodiment of the most frightful crimes that fall under the ban of the divine law, and if it can be admitted into the Church, with the dark cloud of guilt, the deep and wide channels of corruption, and the bitter and overflowing waters of human misery, which follow in its train, there is no crime this side of Pandemonium itself, which can be excluded from the Church of Christ, by the laws which he has enacted for the

government of the same. If this sin, when tolerated in the Church, does not make secession a duty, no other sin, nor all other sins combined, can make secession a duty; and we are driven upon the fearful consequence that we are at liberty, as Christians, to remain in, and support a church which tolerates every sin that has ever been committed in this fallen and corrupt world. Is not this an entire abolition of the Church itself? When the Church spreads her fold so wide as to enclose sinners, she loses her identity, and her distinctive character is merged in the common character of the world. If the toleration of slavery in the Church does not make secession a duty, the existence of drunkenness, fornication, adultery, robbery and theft, would not make secession a duty; and yet not a man can be found who dare say he would remain in a Church after it had repeatedly and publicly refused to make rules for the expulsion of persons notoriously guilty of these latter crimes. By their own decision, then, in relation to other sins, are abolitionists bound to secede from all pro-slavery churches.

Q. On what principle then, can professors of religion remain in connection with a church which TOLERATES, *as a church*, slaveholding?

A. Only on the principle of ignorance, bigotry, or moral dereliction. A principle this, little better than that which led the Jews to crucify the Saviour, and Saul to persecute the Christians. The latter verily thought he was doing God service. The same principle that requires us to expel a corrupt individual, must require us to withdraw ourselves from the association, when a majority are equally corrupt, rendering their expulsion impossible. Now, it is too plain to be denied, that a majority of the M. E. Church, and several other religious denominations, do tolerate slaveholders in the church ; the minority, therefore, not having it in their power to separate themselves from the corruption of slaveholding, by expelling the corrupt party, are bound to effect such separation by seceding themselves from the corrupt body. If it be wrong to remain in church relation with a corrupt individual, which must be true if the church is bound to expel corrupt individuals, it cannot be right to remain in church relation with a greater number of individuals that are equally corrupt. The duty of expulsion rests upon the obligation to separate ourselves from sinners, and as this obligation cannot be lessened by increasing the number of the corrupt to a majority, it follows beyond the power of contradiction, that when a

majority of any religious community become guilty of what ought to exclude an individual, the minority are under obligation to secede; and as slaveholding is a crime for which persons ought to be excluded from the Christian Church, it follows, by an irresistible conclusion, that all true and honest abolitionists are bound to secede from their respective churches, which have made themselves answerable for slaveholding within their pale.

Q. How does it appear that to admit slaveholders is to lend our influence to support slavery?

A. To admit slaveholders to the Church, is to say that slaveholding is, in the opinion of the Church, consistent with the principles and obligations of Christianity; hence, the church that admits slaveholders to her communion, gives the influence of the Christianity she professes, to support slavery. The influence of the whole church which is lent to the support of slavery, by admitting slaveholders to her communion, is made up of the influence of each individual who belongs to and sustains the church; *therefore, every individual that belongs to and supports a church that tolerates slavery, lends his influence to support slavery.*

Q. Does the Bible require us to secede from a church *tolerating* slavery?

A. God, by express command, requires us to come out from all religious associations in fellowship with sinners.

Matt. xviii. 17. "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." This is a universal rule, applicable to all offences; and hence it is applicable to the offence of slaveholding.

1. It is not to be regarded as merely conferring a privilege, or as informing us what we *may do*, but it is to be viewed in the light of a command, imposing an obligation which *binds us in the case.* To treat such persons as the text describes in any other way than as heathen, is to violate the law of Christ.

2. To comply with this command, and treat slaveholders as we would treat a heathen man, we must withdraw from those churches which admit them to fellowship. We would not belong to a church that admitted heathen to membership and communion; and as we are bound to treat slaveholders as we would treat a heathen man, we must be bound to retire from the church where they are admitted and fellowshipped.

Now, let us inquire what relation heathens and publicans sustained to the worshippers of the true God, in the days of our Saviour's incarnation, and what relation have they even at this day? Were

heathen and open sinners permitted to mingle in the worship of the Almighty? No, verily. Are they now permitted to sit at the holy communion, to be members of churches, church sessions, presbyteries, conference, synods, conventions, or general assemblies? These persons had no sort of religious connection with the worshippers of the true God, than which nothing is susceptible of clearer proof. We do not suppose that any have hardihood enough to deny the correctness of this position. Now, as the worshippers of Jehovah had no religious connection whatever—were not allowed to have any, with heathen men, neither are Christians to have any with *impenitent, trespassing brethren*. And this is the sense in which we are to withdraw from pro-slavery brethren. The direction of the Saviour, in this place, means that we dissolve all religious connection with disorderly persons, and it means nothing else. This would fix the meaning of the text, if there were not another passage to the same import in the Bible; for, whatever is plainly, positively, and undeniably taught by any *one text* of Scripture, is true and of Divine authority; for the Scriptures contain a harmony of truth. They never contradict themselves. But this passage does not stand alone."

1 Cor. v. 5. "But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such an one, no, not to eat." On this text it may be remarked,

1. That any one of the offences named brings the offender within its intent and meaning.

2. Every slaveholder comes within the meaning of the text. It not only includes all open sinners, as a general rule, but it specifically includes the sin of slaveholding. *Covetousness* and *extortion* are clearly among the attributes of slavery, and the text forbids us to keep company and eat with those who practise these.

3. Keeping company and eating with men in the sense of the text, cannot be supposed to mean more than *Christian fellowship*, or belonging to the same church with them, therefore the text clearly forbids us to belong to the same church with slaveholders; and hence, when a majority of the church persists in retaining slaveholders, *secession* is the only way left of obeying this command of God.

Here is a plain and positive command not to *eat* with certain persons—disorderly persons. But *what* are we not to eat with them?—a common meal or the feast of un-

leavened bread? It must be the one or the other, as there is no other kind of eating allowed to Christians. If we say, we are not to eat ordinary food with these characters, and that the text does not forbid eating the Lord's Supper with them, we require more care as to whom we would sit at table with in a public inn than at the communion of the body and blood of Christ. And this is not all. We would have to make inquiry every time we might go to eat, to see if any such persons were at the table, and if there should be, we would not dare to eat, if the offender was a Christian by profession. This argument maintains that we may go to the holy communion with men that we dare not eat an ordinary meal with. My object is not to prove that we are not forbidden to eat common food with these persons, but that we are positively forbidden to eat the Lord's supper with them. That this is the meaning of the prohibition, is plain, from the 8th verse, which says, "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth." Here the apostle gives direction how to keep "*the feast of unleavened bread*,"—the feast kept with "unleavened bread." We know of no feasts kept with unleavened bread but

the passover, under the law, and the eucharist under the gospel. And the apostle was not regulating Jewish rights at Corinth, but gospel ordinances: hence he is speaking of the Lord's supper, and prohibits, in the most positive manner, eating it with fornicators, &c. Here we have more light on the command of the text; to withdraw from disorderly brethren is not to take the sacrament of the supper with them, or this is implied in withdrawing from them.

But many take the ground that we have no concern as to who goes to the communion table, so we are right ourselves. We may take the fornicator, the thief, the idolator, or the slaveholder, all clotted with human gore, by the arm, and go to the holy communion, and there, in the nearest visible approach we can make to Christ on earth, hold the closest communion with these characters that can be held out of heaven. A minister in high standing, in one of the pro-slavery churches of this land, said not long since, that he would go to the communion with the devil. But this is not the doctrine of the New Testament. If I have not misapplied this text, and I will thank any who will prove that I have, Christians are forbidden to EAT *the Lord's supper* with any but those who give scripture evidence of piety.

2 Cor. vi. 17. "Wherefore come out

from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." This is a command to Christians to come out from all association with the morally unclean and polluted, and as slavery is as great a sin, and as deeply polluting as the idolatry of the Corinthians, it is as binding on us to come out from church fellowship with slaveholders, as it was in the days of the apostle, to come out from their heathen countrymen. It is a general rule, applicable to corruption in every age, of every kind.

Here the Lord has made a separation from disorderly persons, the condition of sonship. From all these Scriptures we prove clearly and positively, that Christians are to hold no fellowship with disorderly brethren, or other disorderly persons; they are not to *eat* the Lord's supper with them; they are to have no connection with them, but such as they have with idolators and openly profane sinners. If the passages we have noticed do not prove these positions, then nothing can be proved by the scripture.

Eph. v. 2. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." On this text we would remark,

1. Slavery is, beyond all question, one of the unfruitful works of darkness.

2. To belong to a church in which slaveholding is tolerated, is to have some sort of fellowship with it, whereas the text commands us to have *no* fellowship with it.

3. The expression, "but rather reprove them," puts fellowship and reproof in opposition to each other, so that we cannot do both at the same time. It is therefore plain that to scripturally reprove slavery, we must first cease to fellowship it, by retiring from all religious association with it.

2 Thes. "Now we command you, brethren, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly."

1. Slaveholders, and all who apologize for them, and advocate their right to belong to the church, walk disorderly.

2. We cannot withdraw from such only by withdrawing from those churches which tolerate slaveholding in their communion; we are therefore commanded to secede from all pro-slavery religious associations.

God holds us responsible for the moral character of the religious associations to which we belong. We will here introduce the testimony of Mr. Watson, who is a standard author with all Episcopal Methodists, and whose testimony they must admit. Mr. Watson says,

"Every church declares, in some way, how it understands the doctrine and disciplinary laws of Christ. If fundamental error is found, the evil rests upon that church collectively, and *upon the members individually*, every one of whom is bound to try all doctrines by the Holy Scriptures, and cannot support an acknowledged system of error *without guilt*. As to discipline, the manner in which a church provides for public worship, the publication of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the instruction of the ignorant, the succor of the distressed, the admonition of the disorderly, and the excision of offenders, is its declaration of the manner in which it interprets those injunctions, which also it does on its own collective responsibility, *and that of its members*."

The simple declaration of Mr. Watson in the above extract, is, that every individual member of a church is responsible for the doctrine and discipline of the same, and, so far as they are acknowledged to be erroneous, they cannot support them "*without guilt*." Take the M. E. Church then for an illustration, and it must be seen that her doctrine, or her discipline, or both, are fundamentally wrong on the subject of slavery. Her constitutional bodies declare that slavery is right, her official organs contend that slaveholders ought not to be excluded from the church,

and her highest authority declares that colored members shall not testify in church trials against the guilty. This is all wrong, and to support the church in this position, is, according to Mr. Watson, to incur individual and personal guilt. His doctrine is that when the church made these declarations, so dreadfully erroneous, she did it on the individual responsibility of every member. Whoever may be willing to stand in the breach and bear such responsibility, we are not, *we dare not!*

The church is bound, in her collective capacity, to do what her members are bound to do in their individual relations. If individuals were not bound not to hold religious connection with disorderly persons, the church would not be bound to exclude such persons from her fellowship.

The church is an institution of God, and all its rights and obligations are from the divine Institutor; none of them are acquired. They are all ordained of God, and imposed by Him on the individuals composing the church; and, as these individuals are not of the world, but chosen out of the world, the church is not of the world, but is also chosen out of the world, and, as Christians are bound to come out of the world and be separate from sin and sinner, so is the church. But while the duty is the same in both, the

manner of performing it differs. Individuals are to withdraw from *disorderly persons*; the church is to purge them out—exclude them from her fellowship. The church, in her first organization, is composed of persons who have come out from the world, and separated themselves from sin and sinners; hence, she has no connection with either, for the persons composing her have none.

But Christians do not become free from their individual responsibility, by becoming associated in churches. They carry with them into church associations, their individual responsibilities; and whatever would be wrong in their individual relations, would be wrong in their church relations. Heaven knows us in our individual relations, and in these relations, and these only, we will have to appear in judgment. Each will have to give an account of himself to God. The judgment of nations, and churches, &c., takes place in this world. At the judgment of the great day, the wickedness of associated bodies will rest on the individuals composing those associations. We are held individually responsible for all we do, whether in our individual or associated characters or relations. Our individual responsibility can never be lessened by entering into associations, but it may be greatly increased, and in many,

very many instances, is. If ten men fall on a lonely traveller, and take his life, our laws would convict the whole number of murder; each one would be as readily hanged for murder as though each had separately killed a man. In this case, but one murder has been committed, but ten men are guilty of murder. The guilt does not divide among the ten, but each is held by the law as guilty of the whole murder. And this would be the case, had one hundred, or even one thousand, been engaged in the foul deed. The reason of this is found in the fact, that each consented to the dark deed; and we are guilty for all the heart yields up its consent to do, when clear proof appears that the heart did so consent; and the murder of the individual in this illustration, furnishes that proof. But, in relation to our final Judge, no proof is needed; He knows what is in the heart of man, and knows what we consent to do. We see, from the great moral principle on which the laws of the civilized world are based, that responsibility cannot be lessened by associations. But I have said, it may be greatly increased. If ten men may be all guilty of murder, by killing one man, on the principle that each is guilty of what he consents to do, had ten men or one hundred men been killed, on the same principle, each would be guilty of *ten*, *one*

hundred, or *one thousand* murders; for each consented in his heart to the murder of all, and did his part to effect the awful crime. Now, if we are accountable before God for all we consent in our hearts to do, or to aid others in doing—and no doctrine I humbly conceive, is more clearly taught in the Book of God than this—we are held responsible for all the wickedness done by churches, political parties, or other associations *with which we consent to act.*

This, my dear brethren, is an awful subject. I fear that human responsibility is, as yet, very imperfectly understood. The thought that we are held accountable for the evil done by those with whom we may be associated, is distressing, truly distressing; but it is *true*, TRUE. And it is to prevent these awful consequences, that we are so frequently commanded in the holy Scriptures to have no connection with the wicked—to be separate from sinners. Truly awful will be the consequences of disobeying these oft repeated commands.

In the Presbyterian branches of the church, as also in the Methodist and Episcopalian, there is a connectional fellowship which unites all as one in the true and proper sense of Christian fellowship; and this is also true of all church organizations not strictly congregational. In the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, (I mean

all Presbyterian and Methodist divisions of these great sections of the church,) there is but one communion table, because these sections of the Church are one,—membership in one place is membership every place. He that brings a regular certificate of membership from Charleston, S. C., or from any other place, can claim his right of membership in Pittsburgh, though he owned one thousand slaves—on that certificate he can claim his place at the communion table with our anti-slavery friends, and they have no right, or power, as Presbyterians or Methodists, to forbid him the sacrament with them. This simple fact proves that these churches have but one communion table, which reaches all through the United States, if not beyond them, and those who go to this table, *eat* with all who *eat* at it, i. e., all the members of these denominations in the United States. It is a very great mistake to suppose we only *eat* with those who *eat* with us, in the same place, and at the same time. This is true only of churches strictly congregational.

All Presbyterians, Methodists, and others, who have great denominational connections for legislation, judicial investigation, or government, have but *one communion table*, and he who goes to that communion in any one place, fellowships as

truly all who are admitted to the one table of that denomination, as he does those he communes with at the communion in the church where he statedly worships. Those who are strictly congregational, commune with none but the members of their own immediate church; but Methodists, Presbyterians, &c., commune with all of their denomination.

The General Conference being the legislative department of the M. E. Church, and that body admitting slaveholders to seats in it, every member of that church holds such a connection with slaveholders, as binds him to obey the laws they may make, and to hold his membership on conditions they may lay down.

The connections which exist in the churches just noticed, as also the connections with slaveholders, are inseparable from membership in any such church. Now, if slavery is sinful, slaveholders must be *disorderly* persons; and those who would obey the command in the text, and the voice of God, clearly expressed elsewhere in the Scriptures, have no alternative but to withdraw from pro-slavery churches; for they cannot withdraw from *disorderly* brethren, while they live in them—this is impossible.

Again: if slavery be an unfruitful work of darkness, we cannot obey the command

to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, while we retain membership in a pro-slavery church; hence, we must leave such a church, if we are in it, to obey this command of God.

I will suppose a case, for the sake of illustration. Ten of us unite in a church; and this number might constitute a church, as truly Christ's as any that ever existed. One of our number commits a crime, which we as Christians are forbidden to fellowship—say, if you please, extortion or fornication. The offender is called to an account, and five out of the nine who try him, conclude to keep him in the church to reform him; what must the four do? They are, as are also the five, forbidden to *eat* the Lord's supper with the offender, to have any fellowship with him. They (the four pure ones) are required to withdraw from this disorderly person—to have no fellowship with this worker of darkness—and they cannot exclude him from the church; hence they must withdraw, for they must have no Christian connection with the vile, impenitent offender; they must leave the church to obey God, and save their souls. When a corrupt majority retain persons in the church, whom God forbids his *people* to fellowship, and commands them to separate—to withdraw from—his *people* must leave that church.

God requires them to leave it, and they must be saved in disobedience, if they are saved in it.

Psal. l. 18. "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partakers with adulterers." No charge is here brought against the accused party, that they had committed the crime of theft or adultery, but only that they had consented with those that had committed the one, and been partakers with those who had been guilty of the other. Will it then be denied that we consent with, and are made partakers with, any class of men, when we voluntarily unite with them in the same Christian church? If not, the text clearly condemns our association with slaveholders, and holds us responsible for their conduct, so far as we unite with them on terms of Christian fellowship.

2 John x. 11. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

This relates to false or corrupt teachers. The command not to receive them into our houses, is not intended to prohibit us from entertaining them upon principles of charity, as we would feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, but to prohibit us from entertaining them as Christians and Chris-

tian ministers, by which we might give countenance to their corruptions. "He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evils deeds." Dr. Clarke says the words "neither bid him God speed," "mean, according to the eastern use of them, 'Have no religious connection with him, nor act towards him so as to induce others to believe you acknowledge him as a brother.'" Taking this interpretation of the words as correct, it follows that to have religious connection with men, is to become partakers of their evil deeds, and this every man does who belongs to the same church with slaveholders. Do not Methodist bishops bid slaveholders God speed, when they lay their hands upon their heads, and ordain them to the office and work of the ministry? And do not northern abolitionists bids these bishops God speed in their course, when they suffer them to lay upon their heads these same hands that have just been taken from the heads of slaveholders? And do not all the laity say, God speed to the whole operation, by suffering their own ministers to be ordained, and their own pulpits to be supplied by bishops that ordain slaveholders, and by belonging to, and supporting a church, in which slaveholders constitute a large portion of the membership and ministry? Those who can answer these questions, so

as to exonerate abolition members of pro-slavery churches from responsibility, will do their cause great service by exercising their rare gifts on the subject.

Rev. ii. 14, 15. "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." The charge is not for *believing* the doctrine of Balaam, and of the Nicolaitanes, but for *having those in the church* that held these doctrines; and the same principles make the church responsible so long as she has slaveholders within her pale, and those that hold that "slavery as it exists in the United States is not a moral evil."

Rev. xviii. 4. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This is spoken of mystic Babylon, and beyond all doubt it refers to some corrupt community. From it we may deduce the following propositions:

1. God may have a people in a corrupt community, after a body has become corrupt.

2. When a community has thus become corrupt as a body, God requires the uncorrupted portion to come out, that is secede from the corrupt majority.

3. Such as refuse to do it, by such refusal make themselves partakers of the sins of the body, and render themselves liable to the punishment due to such sins. If the text does not contain these propositions, it contains no meaning.

Here is a plain and express command from God to his people, to withdraw from a corrupt church; for all Protestant commentators and divines, so far as I have any knowledge of them, agree that mystic Babylon, here spoken of, is the fallen Church of Rome. So God did require his *people* to come out of one corrupt Church. And what are the reasons given for the requirement? That his *people* be not partakers of the fallen church's sins, nor receive of her plagues.

I take the ground, that when a church becomes so corrupted as to place its members in Christian fellowship with characters which God has forbidden his *people* to fellowship—which it would be sinful to fellowship—that church has reached the point of corruption, at which God's *people* must leave it. And when a church tolerates, sanctions, or in any way approves of sin, gives countenance or support to sin, they are also bound to leave it, else they become partakers of those sins.

From what we have advanced in the previous part of this discourse, it appears

plain, that we cannot remain in any of the pro-slavery churches of the land, without fellowshipping persons whom God expressly forbids his people to hold fellowship with; and slavery being a sin, and the churches giving sanction to the practice of that sin, by approving of slaveholders as acceptable ministers and members, we become partakers in that sin, if we do not come out of those churches. Here I might rest the argument with great confidence; but knowing the opposition to receive truth on this subject, I will proceed further.

God's *people* were commanded to *come out* of Babylon. General charges are brought against Babylon, and the specifications to sustain these charges given; so we have the most exact information as to the crimes of this fallen church. It is said she had become the "habitation of devils," "the hold of every foul spirit," "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird," and that "her sins" had "reached unto heaven." These general charges are truly awful; and it would be thought monstrous to say these things about the churches of free, happy America; but when we come to the specifications which make up these charges, we may change our opinions. What were Babylon's sins, which fixed on her these awful charges? Her "mer-

chandize of *gold*, and *silver*, and *precious stones*, and of *pearls*, and *fine linen*, and *purple*, and *silk*, and *scarlet*, and all *thyine wood*, and all manner of *vessels of ivory*, and all manner of *vessels of most precious wood*, and of *brass*, and *iron*, and *marble*, and *cinnamon*, and *odors*, and *ointments*, and *frankincense*, and *wine*, and *oil*, and fine *flour*, and *wheat*, and *beasts*, and *sheep*, and *horses*, and *chariots*, and *slaves*, and *souls of men*.—REVELATIONS xviii. 12, 13. Here is an enumeration of the particulars which make up the sum of Babylon's iniquity; here we have specifications clear and definite. Now compare Babylon, as here described, with the pro-slavery churches of this day, and you cannot fail to see that she was no worse than they are, if as bad. In these specifications, there is but one thing which shocks us much: trading in SLAVES and SOULS OF MEN. I say one thing, for these make but one act. They who trade in slaves, trade also in the souls of men; for slaves are men having souls.

Trading in "*slaves and souls of men*," was Babylon's chief crime. What do we understand by a church trading in any kind of merchandize? The members are the church; what the members do, the church does. This is especially true when the highest authorities of the church permit, allow, or sanction what they do. The

members of Babylon traded in "*slaves and souls of men*," and the highest ecclesiastical body of the church, or Babylon, still allowed those who did so to retain their membership, as good and acceptable members. This tells the whole tale. And is not this the case in the pro-slavery churches of this land? It is. The members of these churches trade in "slaves and souls of men"—have about TWO HUNDRED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS invested in immortal souls, for whom Christ died, some of whom are the members of Christ's mystical body, "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh," "heirs to a crown of glory which fadeth not away;" these they sell like brute beasts, with "*beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots.*" Babylon did no more. Hell could ask no more. In this one particular, and the main one too, there is an exact agreement.

But it is important to our inquiry, to know if the slavery in which Babylon traded differed from American slavery; and if it did, was it more or less sinful? Mr. Wesley said that American slavery was the "vilest that ever saw the sun." He is good authority, at least with Methodists. But facts are authority with all. The period of Babylon's trading in "slaves and souls of men," must be one of two, from about A. D. 1000 to 1300, or from

1521 to the present period; as these are the only periods the members of the Church of Rome were engaged to any considerable extent in slavery and the slave trade. The slavery of the first period differed from American slavery in many important particulars, and the difference is all against us. Slaves, then, could be sold only with the soil; the soil and slaves could not be separated; where the slave was born, there he died. Under that system, families could never be broken up. Husbands and wives, parents and children, could live and die together; they could lighten each other's burdens by tender sympathies, by interchange of love. The wife had, in the hour of distress, a husband's bosom to confide in; the husband, in his afflictions, a wife's heart to feel for him; the son, a father's council to guide him; the daughter, a mother's tenderness to watch over her, and a mother's bosom to dry her tears in, when heart-broken and afflicted. But none of these sweets mingle in the bitter cup in America. Here the demon hand of oppression seizes the web into which is woven all the sympathies and loves of social life, and tears it in pieces,—separates for life husbands and wives, parents and children, prostrates all that can impart any joy to human life. Then, masters might whip their slaves, but they dare not em-

ploy another to do it; all the whipping that was done, was done by the master's own hand. Now, the master may employ as many unfeeling wretches as he may choose, and by hired hands, whip his slave to death. Then, slaves were admitted as parties at law, and could implead their own masters; then, law regulated slavery, and the slave could appeal to it in his own person, and obtain redress. Now, a slave cannot be a party in any suit at law whatever—now, the avarice, cupidity and lust of the master regulate slavery, and from these the slave has no appeal. Then, slaves were allowed their oaths against their master—now denied them against any white person. Then, the chastity of female slaves was protected by law; if a master offered an insult to the chastity of his female slave, she obtained her freedom by making oath to that fact. Now, if she does not yield to the criminal desires of her master, she may be whipped to death, if no white person be present, or sold to some distant land for a harlot. From these facts, we see that the churches of our land trade in a system of slavery far more wicked than Babylon traded in; and if God's *people* could not remain in church relations with those who practised the less sin or evil, without being partakers of the Church's sin, much less can they, if they continue in connection with the greater.

I will give one more reason to prove that God's *people* are required to *come out* of pro-slavery churches. Believers are called the "salt of the earth," "the light of the world," "the Lord's witnesses," "epistles of commendation," of the Divine teaching, known and read of all men. They are to witness for the truth and power of religion, in two ways. 1. By a holy life and an upright conversation. 2. By presenting to the world, as examples for imitation, those who are saved by grace. This is done by Christian fellowship; we fellowship Christians, not *heathen men* and *publicans*. Those whom we fellowship, we acknowledge as God's children, and present them to the world, as evidences of the power of saving grace. Now if we hold fellowship with sinners, we present them to the world as God's children, and say to the world, follow them. We, as professors of religion, are expected to have more knowledge of Christianity, than the unthinking mass; and those whom we acknowledge to be Christians, will, for the most part, be looked upon as such; and the multitude's notions of Christianity will be regulated by the principles and practices of those they are taught to believe are Christians. Now if we acknowledge as Christians, present to the world as Christians, those whose lives are vicious, we are false wit-

nesses of the truth, and hold a false light before the world, pass off as epistles of commendation, counterfeit Christians, and truly awful will be our account. This reason, were there no others, is sufficient to cause God's people to come out of slave-holding churches. And now, dear brethren, I ask you to look at this whole subject in the fear of God, and in reference to your soul's salvation: let each one ask himself the question, can I be guiltless, holding fellowship with those who trade in *slaves and souls of men?* Can I, dare I, sin against God, in remaining in a pro-slavery Church?

Q. We are bound to do all the good we can in the world, and if we can do more good by staying in a pro-slavery church than by leaving it, are we not bound to stay?

A. It is true that we are bound to do all the good we can; but it is equally true, that we can do no good by disobeying the commands of God. To talk of weighing probabilities of doing good in disobedience to God's commands, and to admit that it is possible to do more good by disobeying the Most High, than by obeying him, is monstrous. This objection takes this ground: that though God says, "come out of her, my *people*," they have a right to reply, we think we can do more good

by staying in, and therefore ought not to come out. God says, withdraw from every disorderly brother; the objectors say, Lord, I can do more good by staying with him. The Lord says, let certain persons be to you as heathen men; the objectors say, Lord, I can do more good by letting them be to me as Christian men. The Lord says, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; the objectors say, I can do more good by having the closest fellowship with them. The Lord says, know not to *eat* the feast of unleavened bread with fornicators, &c.; the objectors say, Lord, I can do more good by *eating* it with them. Thus the plain commands of God are set at naught, with the professed object of pleasing him and doing good; and not only so, we are held bound thus to disobey our Maker. And yet this objection is urged by ministers of the sanctuary, in the light of the nineteenth century.

Q. Ought we not to keep slaveholders in our Christian fellowship, to secure our influence over them for good, and do good to the slaves, by bringing their masters under the influence of religion, and thus abolish slavery in the end?

A. This question goes on the assumption that men are to be saved in their sins, not from them. When God says, purge out the old leaven, before it leaven the

whole lump of meal, the objector says, not so, Lord, I will keep the leaven in the meal, that the meal may make the leaven meal. Let us apply the doctrine of this objection to some other sinners. We will keep drunkards in the church, to secure our influence over them, and make them better to their families. We will keep in fornicators for the same reason; if we turn them out, they will give unrestrained indulgence to their passions, and treat their poor wives worse. We will keep thieves and liars in, to secure our influence over them, and to make them all good in the end. This is the doctrine which is brought to support slavery. But this is not all; if we should keep such characters in the church to reform them, we ought to take such in for the very same reason, and not only keep the door of the church open, but take into her arms an unsaved world, with all its abominations. And this is the practice on the subject of slavery: not only are those who are slaveholders kept in, but all who offer are taken in, if there be no other objection. According to this doctrine, we ought to have all the sinners in the world in the church, to secure religious influence over them. Is this the doctrine of the Saviour? No, verily!

Q. God owns and blesses the Church; souls are awakened and converted in it;

there are many good people in it; ought we therefore to leave it?

A. God had a people in Babylon; they were made his people by awakening and conversion. They were awakened and converted by the outpouring of his Spirit; and this was all in Babylon; and these converted people still enjoyed the outpouring of the Spirit up to the moment the voice was heard from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my *people*."

Q. The church is my mother, and it would be ungrateful in me to forsake my mother. Ought I not to cleave to my mother?

A. God's children are not orphans, they have a father as well as a mother. They are bound to obey their father, even God. Now suppose my mother should go a whoring after strange gods, must I forsake and disobey my father, and follow her? I trow not. Christians must obey God; and if the church become so corrupt that we cannot stay in it without disobeying God, we must leave it. I fear those who have so much to say about their obligations to the church, and so little to say about their obligations to the Redeemer, are not the children of God—have not the religion of Jesus, but are orphans—have no father, are children of the church—have church religion. We are bound to love our

mother, the church, so long as she is true and faithful to our father, God, but no longer.

Q. "Mr. Wesley was opposed to leaving the church, and preached and published a sermon against schism, and another on attending the ordinances of the English National Church, which church was very wicked. Mr. Wesley was no seceder." Why then should I secede?

A. Mr. Wesley in his sermon on schism preached the very doctrine here advanced. He says most emphatically, that when a church requires its members to do something forbidden by the word of God, or places them in circumstances in which they cannot do what God's word enjoins, or must do what his word forbids, then, and in that case, they are not only free to withdraw from that church, but are bound by the law of the Most High to do it, and to do it immediately too; and the ruinous effects of separation, which he portrays in glowing colors, lie all at the door of the church.—See Sermon on Schism, vol. 2, page 165, par. 17. We cannot stay in a pro-slavery church, without doing what God's word forbids, and leaving undone what it enjoins; hence, according to Mr. Wesley's sermon, we are bound to leave such churches.

Q. Christ *ate* the holy sacrament of the

supper with Judas, who had a devil. Can we then be bound not to eat it with wicked persons?

A. Judas did not eat the supper with the Saviour, or any other person. By comparing Luke xxiii. from 14 to 21, with John xiii. from 26 to 31, it will be seen that the supper was instituted after the eating of the passover, and that Judas left the Saviour and the disciples while they were eating the passover, or immediately at the close; so that he was not present at the sacrament of the supper.

I think I have proved that it is the duty of all Christian abolitionists to secede from the pro-slavery churches to which they may respectively belong; but before we close our address, due respect for the opinions of others requires us to notice some of the principal objections which have been urged against our position.

Q. If the fact that the sin of slavery is in the Church renders it a duty to secede, then the existence of any other sin in the Church must force us to the same result; and as there is no church which has not sin and sinners in it, how can we belong to any church on earth.

A. Secession is not urged because the sin of slavery is *in the Church*, but because it is TOLERATED *in the Church*, or because it is *knowingly* and *publicly* suffered to

exist in the Church. Did any other sin exist in the Church, under the same circumstances, equally known to the Church and the world, and by the *same toleration*, it would equally demand secession on the part of all those who are opposed to association with sinners. Take an illustration: Suppose we belong to a local church or religious society. Suppose an individual member of such church knows that another member is guilty of stealing a sheep—the crime cannot be worse than to steal a man. He goes to the church with his complaint that A. has stolen a sheep, but for want of proof, he fails to convince the church that Br. A. is guilty, though he is sure of his guilt. These facts may not justify secession, because the church does not sanction theft; they would expel A. if they were convinced of his guilt, and they would be convinced of his guilt, if reasonable evidence were laid before them. But suppose the accuser convinces the church that A. has really stolen the sheep, and they refuse, or a majority of them, to expel him, on the ground that *it is not improper for sheep-stealers* to belong to the church,—the body then assumes the responsibility of sheep-stealing, and every member who would not share that responsibility must secede. This is precisely the ground on which we urge secession

for the sin of slavery; it is not because it has got into the Church, and lies concealed beyond detection, but because it is suffered *publicly to exist* in the Church, on the ground that it is *right* to retain slaveholders in the Church. If it can be shown, that any other sin exists in the Church, by the same *public toleration*, it will furnish another unanswerable reason for secession.

Q. It is sometimes urged that, if we are bound to secede from the Church, because it tolerates slavery, for the same reason must we secede from the civil compact, because government tolerates slavery. How is this?

A. 1. The principles involved in the two cases are not the same. Membership in civil society does not involve Christian fellowship, and is not understood by the world as endorsing the character and sentiments of the other members of such civil society, or the laws and administration; but membership in a church does imply Christian fellowship, and a sanction of the laws and government of the same, so far as moral principle is concerned. We may belong to a church, and not endorse every thing on the ground of expediency; many prudential rules may exist which we may think are not the best, yet to belong to a church is to endorse its principles and government, so far as to say they are not

wicked,—but such is not the case with the membership in civil society; it is not so understood by the world.

A. 2. If the objection be well-founded, if it be true that if sin in the Church makes it our duty to secede, it must also be our duty to secede from civil society, because such sin exists in civil society, it must follow that we are no more responsible for the sin that exists in the Church, to which we belong, than we are for the sin that exists in the civil society in which we live. This is not only contrary to every man's common sense, but it must involve the following consequence. As, not only slaveholders, but as thieves, liars, drunkards, whore-masters and murderers, all belong to civil society, we must either secede from civil society, or we are at liberty to remain members of a Church where all these characters are admitted. There is no way to evade the force of this but to admit that sin in the Church may render it our duty to secede, which does not render it our duty to withdraw from civil society, the same sin existing there, in which case the whole objection is given up.

CONCLUSION.

1. *Slavery violates the most solemn portions of God's prohibitory law.* I might show that it violates every precept,—the whole law in detail; but I will confine myself to a few illustrations. Take the first commandment which God gave on the mount, rendered dreadful by the darkness and thunder and lightning with which Jehovah clad himself, as he stood upon its trembling summit to deliver his law.

When God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," he asserts his absolute right to man, a right not to be reconciled with the relation of the man thus claimed to another being, as his personal chattel; he therefore who claims or holds a human being as property, interferes with the rights of God, and takes such man thus held out of the hands of the divine government, and compels such slave to acknowledge some other God, some other authority besides God. Slavery is therefore idolatry, and yet it is practised by the M. E. Church.

The following gives a view of legal slavery.

Law of South Carolina.—"Slaves shall

be deemed, sold, taken, reputed and judged in law to be CHATTELS PERSONAL, in the hands of their owners and possessors, TO ALL INTENTS, CONSTRUCTIONS AND PURPOSES WHATSOEVER."

Law of Louisiana.—"The condition of the slave being merely a *passive* one, his *subordination* to his master, and to all who represent him, is not susceptible of *any modification or restriction*, in such manner, that he owes to his master and to all his family A RESPECT WITHOUT BOUNDS and an ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE."

Respect without bounds and absolute obedience due to man, cannot be reconciled with the command of God,—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." We see from this what the civil and political relation between master and slave is. It is a relation which violates the first commandment, and involves the crime of idolatry. But has the M. E. Church sanctioned this relation? We have the answer in the following language of the General Conference:—

"We wholly disclaim any right, *wish* or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between the master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union."

Here the law-making body of the M. E. Church has given its *direct sanction* to a violation of the first commandment, as we

have shown above that the relation here sanctioned involves such violation. If this will not justify secession, it is not possible to conceive of any crime that would.

Take another commandment,—"Thou shalt not commit adultery,"—and is it not equally plain, the relation which the church has sanctioned, as above given, involves a violation of this seventh commandment as it is that it violates the first, "Thou shalt not steal?" And is it not plain that, when the General Conference sanctioned the civil and political relation between master and slave, *as it exists in the slaveholding States*, that they sanctioned the worst kind of theft, robbery and oppression? It is not the relation as it exists in the M. E. Church, as they tell us, for the slave's good, but as it exists in the SLAVEHOLDING STATES.

2. *The slavery which the M. E. Church supports, nullifies the most solemn precepts of God's law, and the most solemn duties incumbent upon man, as a subject of his moral government and a social being.* "Honor thy father and mother," is the command of God. And can slavés—can the hundred thousand slaves held by the members of the M. E. Church, yield obedience to this command? Is it true that the children of slaves, owned by Methodists, have a right to obey the command which says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord"?

Their civil and political relation to their pious masters, is the same as those held by the most wicked master that ever swung a whip; and the church has sanctioned the relation both in the one case and in the other.

Is it true that slave fathers and mothers have the right of bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as commanded by God? Is it true that in slavery every man has his own wife, and every woman her own husband? Is it true that among slaves held by Methodists, husbands and wives are free to respond to the obligations incumbent on the marriage relation,—"Husbands, love your wives. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it"? Can even Methodist husbands, held as slaves by other Methodists, thus love and *cherish* their wives as their own flesh? Alas! they have no flesh of their own: they are "chattels personal, to all intents, purposes and constructions whatsoever," and the M. E. Church disclaims all intention, and even *wish*, to interfere with this relation.

It is written in the book of God, "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands:" another text requires them to be "obedient to their own husbands." We ask, then, can enslaved wives—"personal chattels"—those whose condition

with reference to another man, not the husband, "is a *passive* one;" whose subordination to such other man is not susceptible of any *modification or restriction*; who owes to such other man, not her husband, "a respect *without bounds* and an *absolute obedience*;" we ask, can such a wife submit herself to her own husband? Can she be obedient to her husband? We repeat again, this is the civil and political relation which the General Conference of the M. E. Church sanctioned in 1836—with which she declared she had *no wish to interfere!* "If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin. Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect to persons." James ii. Is not all the distinction made in the M. E. Church, even upon her statute book, a violation of this law? And does not the colored testimony resolution of the last General Conference rebuke the apostle for his doctrine of Christian equality? Was not that conference wiser (in their own conceit) than he? If these outrages upon the divine law do not make separation from those who have committed them a duty, such separation need never take place on account of transgression.

That slavery, in its *worst form*, does really exist in the M. E. Church, I offer in proof the following testimonies.

The first is a letter addressed by Rev.

Charles Adams, an Episcopal Methodist, to a Methodist anti-slavery convention assembled in the city of New York, Oct. 6, 1840.

"Of slavery, as existing in the M. E. Church, I am at a loss to speak. That this is an evil—a *great* and PRODIGIOUS wrong—a *deep* BLACK STAIN upon American Methodism, I *have always believed* That ministers—Methodist ministers—conferences of Methodist ministers, should come down from their appropriate dignity, and stoop to the amazingly humiliating business of exonerating slavery from the charge of moral evil, is, if possible, still more distressing and disgusting. With slavery, *slavery in the M. E. Church*, I have no fellowship. I join you entirely in denouncing it as wrong, most cruelly and detestably wrong. I greatly lament that we, as a church, have any participation in the *accursed system of human bondage* On that day when a slaveholder was first admitted to our church, I am inclined to look back as Job once did upon the day of his birth,—'Let that day perish—let that day be darkness—let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let a cloud dwell upon it. Let the blackness of the day terrify it. Let it not be joined with the days of the year. Let it not come into the number of months. That night, let it be solitary—let no joyful voice come there. Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark. Let it look for light, and

have none; neither let it see the dawning of the day.'

"It is said that I ought to join my brethren in denouncing slavery *in the M. E. Church?* I *have* cursed *that slavery*—I *do* curse it—by the grace of God, I will curse it as my dying sentiment!"

The next witness I shall introduce, is Rev. Horace Moulton, also an Episcopal Methodist, and an *eye witness.*

"Bishop Hedding's doctrine of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church at the South being in accordance with our Saviour's Golden Rule, is not only new and surprising to me, but it utterly confounds me. And, unless there has been a great change among Methodists within a few years, I think this doctrine must be entirely new to the more southern portions of our church at the present day.

* * * * "I was in the midst of slavery most of the time for five successive years—and unless its spirit has greatly changed in our church since 1824, I think Bishop Hedding must be in a great error in regard to our Methodist brethren holding slaves in conformity to the Golden Rule.

* * * * "I was a frequent attendant at the auctions where slaves in herds were sold under the hammer, but I never heard saint or sinner say they had the least scruples in buying and selling negroes any more than they had in buying and sell-

ing the cotton which they raised. I made the M. E. Church my place of worship. Here I made my profession in favor of their doctrines. Here I first joined the M. E. Church and was a member of it two years. I became acquainted with nearly all the male members in our church, and with many who were friendly to that church, but I never heard the sentiment advanced by any one of them that they thought they held their slaves in unison with the Golden Rule. Neither did I ever hear that any Methodist preacher or lay member ever had any scruples in regard to buying and selling slaves like other men.

* * * * "I hired slaves of brother Wm. Black, one winter, who was a Methodist in Savannah. I was also acquainted with the brethren Briants who were merchants, one of whom was a Methodist preacher, with brother Winter, a local preacher, and with brother B. F. Stone—all the above bought and sold slaves like other men, so far as my knowledge serves me. Those men whom I have mentioned were some of the principal Methodists in Savannah, all of whom used to mingle with the crowds at the auction where negroes were bought and sold like other articles of merchandise; and if I do not mistake, they were all slave owners, except one."

The last witness that I shall offer, out of the multitude that might be presented, is the Rev. S. Hoes, who is a minister in

the M. E. Church, and who has travelled extensively in the slaveholding States :

"The following conversation was had in the presence of brother Abel Stevens, [Editor of Zion's Herald,] on the evening of the 21st of February, 1839, with Robert Chappel, who is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and has been an intelligent and devoted member of the said church for eighteen years. His father was one of the first Methodists in Virginia.—Mr. Chappel has lived in Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and now resides in Texas. He is acquainted with slavery in all its parts, in and out of the church, and is himself a slaveholder. I asked him the following questions, and he gave the appended answers :

Ques. 1. Do the Methodists generally hold slaves in the Southern States ?

Ans. They do.

Ques. 2. Do the Methodists of the South generally believe slavery, as it exists in the United States, to be a moral evil or sin ?

Ans. They do not.

Ques. 3. Do they believe it morally right ?

Ans. They do.

Ques. 4. Do Methodist ministers generally own slaves in the South ?

Ans. They do, when they are able.

Ques. 5. Do they believe it to be morally right ?

Ans. They believe with the members of the church on the subject.

Ques. 6. Do ministers and members buy and sell slaves in common with others?

Ans. They do.

Ques. 7. When members and ministers do buy and sell slaves, are they arraigned and dealt with according to discipline?

Ans. They are not. I never knew an instance in my life.

Ques. 8. When Methodist families attend to family worship, do they call in their domestic or house slaves?

Ans. They do not, as a general thing; it is very seldom the case.

Ques. 9. Do they go to the quarters of the field hands and have prayers with them?

Ans. It would be difficult to find an instance of this kind.

Ques. 10. Do Methodists teach their slaves to read the Word of God?

Ans. They do not; they are not allowed to, and in general, they want the disposition.

Ques. 11. Do Christians treat their slaves more leniently than others?

Ans. They do not, as a general thing.—Many of them are more severe than others, and some ministers still more cruel, not being as good judges of what constitutes a day's work as many wicked masters.

Ques. 12. Are the foregoing (answers) applicable to other churches?

Ans. They are.

Ques. 13. Do you believe, from all that you have seen and known, that if, when

the federal compact was entered into, all the Christian denominations had set their faces against slavery, and had had nothing to do with it, that it would probably have been abolished by this time?

Ans. I do think so.

S. Hoes.

Utica, April 13, 1840."

3. *The church has not only neglected her duty towards the enslaved millions of this land, but has absolutely imposed restraints upon her ministers and members, to prevent their doing their duty in the case.* "The righteous considereth the cause of the poor, but the wicked regardeth not to know it." All has been done on the part of the church that could have been done, to shut away the light from the people on the subject of slavery. "Cry aloud! Spare not! Lift up thy voice like a trumpet! Show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sin." Who in the church has cried against the great sin of slavery, but a few despised and persecuted abolitionists, who have had the whole official influence of the church against them? "Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction." Who is dumb in the sense of this text but the slave? But the church, instead of speaking for them, has commanded all her pulpits to be silent, and all her ministers to "wholly refrain" from pleading their

cause. "Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them." How, then, would Christians and ministers remember themselves, if they were in bonds? Would they not plead with both God and man for deliverance? If so, they must do so for the slave, to remember him *as bound with him.* Were we in bonds—were our wives, our children, our fathers or our mothers in the dark bondage of slavery, a meeting-house would not be too good to be occupied in pleading their cause; and did we command a pulpit, we would make it speak against oppression, and in the name of God cry, "Let the oppressed go free." We would not stop to consider whether or not it would be popular to consider how much of our reputation we might lose in the estimation of oppressors and their apologists. But how has the M. E. Church obeyed the above text? How has she remembered those in bonds as bound with them? She has commanded all her ministers and members to be still, to say nothing about it, "to wholly refrain" from the discussion of the wrongs of the slave. Is not this an awful violation of duty? But it may be said that the whole church has not refrained—this does not lessen the guilt of such official advice. The church in her highest council advised all to refrain, and designed that all should refrain: she is therefore just as guilty as though she had

succeeded in shutting every mouth from pleading for the dumb, and in blotting the remembrance of the bondman's woes from the entire church, leaving the crushed millions to suffer on uncared for, and to send up their wail unheard by the ear of mercy, and unresponded to by the voice of humanity. And yet we are told that we must not secede from this church; that we must stick to her and share her fearful responsibility. Others must hazard what they will, but we dare not hazard this with our knowledge of the facts, and our views of the moral turpitude involved.

4. *By adhering to such a church we violate all those scriptures which speak of church order and discipline.* That Christian churches under the apostolic government, were designed to include none but Christians in heart and life, will not be denied, and that the scriptures contain rules for separating the unworthy from their communion is equally plain. These rules are of such a character as to prove it wrong for us to remain in Christian association with known offenders. Among these texts are Matt. xviii. 15, 17; Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 5, 9; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14: "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man"—"Avoid them"—"Deliver such an one unto Satan"—"Not to keep company"—"Withdraw yourselves"—"Have no company with him"—these are all ex-

pressions which imply expulsion or secession, and prove beyond a doubt that, as Christians, we are bound to withdraw from the associations of all unworthy persons, or exclude them from our associations. This remark is to be applied only to Christians or church associations, the members of which, by the law of Christ and by the common sentiments of the world, constitute a common brotherhood. To remain in such associations with open offenders, as all slaveholders and their apologists are, is a direct violation of the law of Christ. It is worthy of remark that the language of scripture sometimes favors the idea of expulsion, and sometimes secession or a withdrawing on the part of the pure. This leaves us to make our own election under the circumstances of the case, exercising our best judgment in the fear of God; but where corruption exists, we must do one or the other. Now in the case before us, the expulsion of slaveholders and their apologists is not practicable, as they are far the strongest party, and have the constitution and government of the church on their side, under which circumstances our only means of obeying the law of Christ is secession.

5. *By remaining in such a church we render ourselves liable to all the maledictions implied in those scriptures which hold us responsible for the associations we sustain*,

and the influence we thereby exert. The following are a few texts of this class: Psa. l. 18. "When thou sawest a thief then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers." Slaveholders sustain both theft and adultery. Prov. xxix. 24. "Whoso is partaker with a thief hateth his own soul."

We cannot see how we could more effectually be partakers with thieves than by uniting with slaveholders in a common brotherhood to promote religion.

Isa. i. 23. "Thy princes are companions of thieves." If slaveholders be thieves, which cannot be denied, the princes (chief ministers) of the M. E. Church are most notoriously the companions of thieves. Eph. v. 6, 7. "Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; be not ye therefore partakers with them." 1 Tim. v. 22. "Neither be partakers of other men's sins; keep thyself pure." 2 John 11. "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Rev. ii. 20. "I have a few things against thee because thou sufferest that woman Jezabel to teach and to seduce my servants." Was that worse than for the M. E. Church to suffer slave-holders, men-stealers, to teach? Verse 15. "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." Was that worse than the

doctrine of slavery? Rev. xviii. 4. "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

And now, my dear brethren, having laid this most important subject before you in the plainest manner I am able, you must come to your own conclusions of duty from the arguments presented. I know the truth, in this case, has fearful odds to contend with; church attachments are powerful; we have many friends in these churches whom we love, and whom we ought to love; these it will be hard to separate from. In these circumstances, Satan will try to bind us to sin, the vilest sin, slavery, by the very cords which bind us to God's people and God's church. Shun this snare. Let not feeling enter the mind while this great question is under examination. Make up your mind as to what is duty—what God requires. This done, recollect that he who hesitates between duty and inclination is undone. O! brethren, I feel for you! I tremble for you! There are few, very few questions on which it is so difficult to act right, as on this. May the Most High God and Saviour aid you to do your duty on this most important, most difficult subject, that you may stand before him at last, without spot and blameless, which may the Lord grant for his name and mercy's sake. *Amen.*

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